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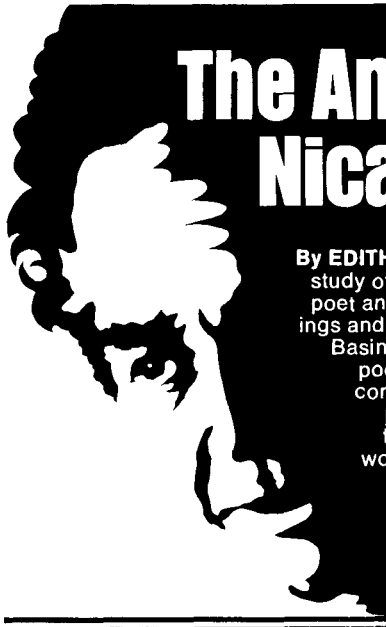

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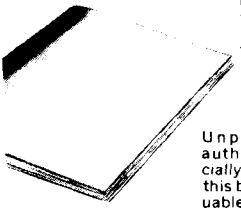

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>
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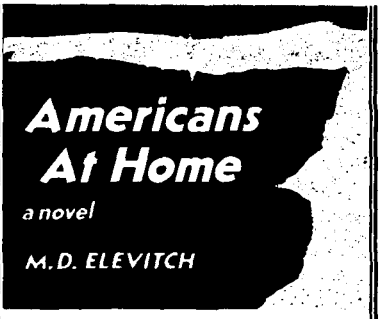


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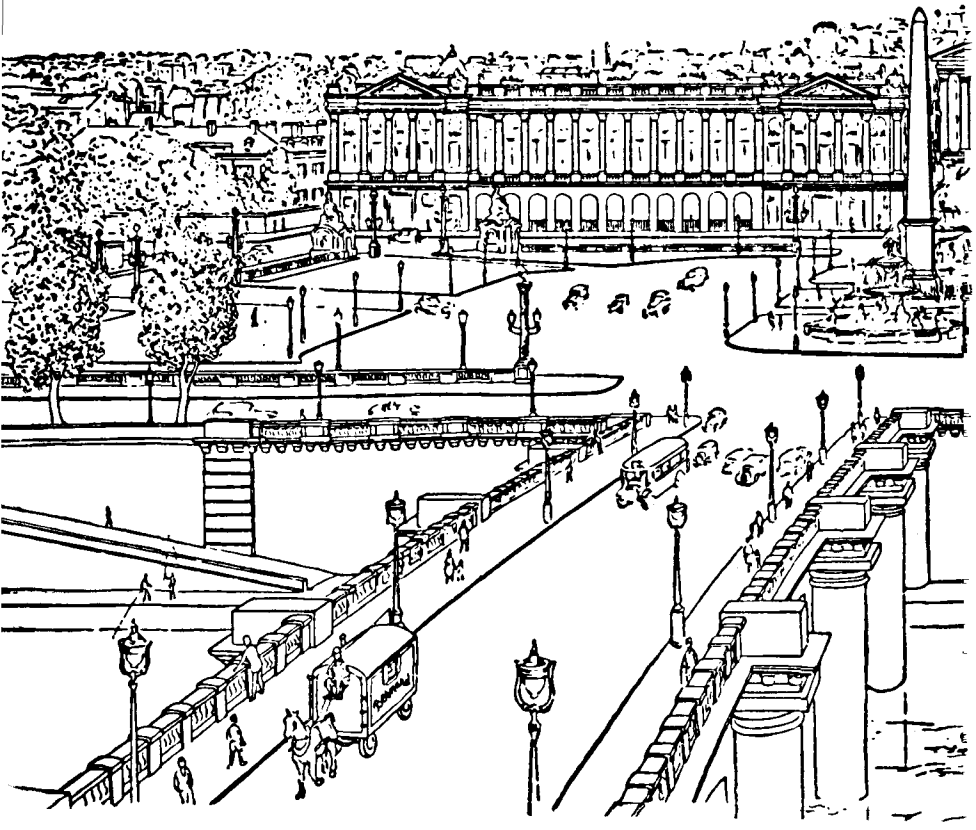

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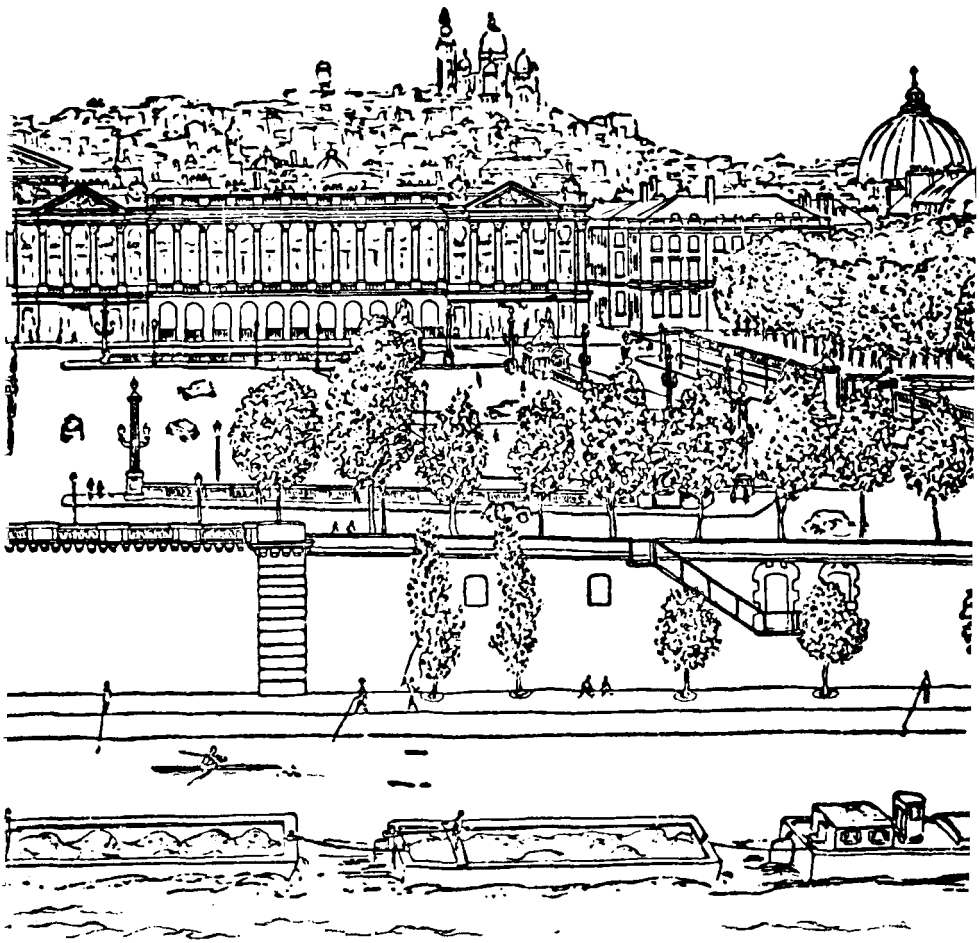

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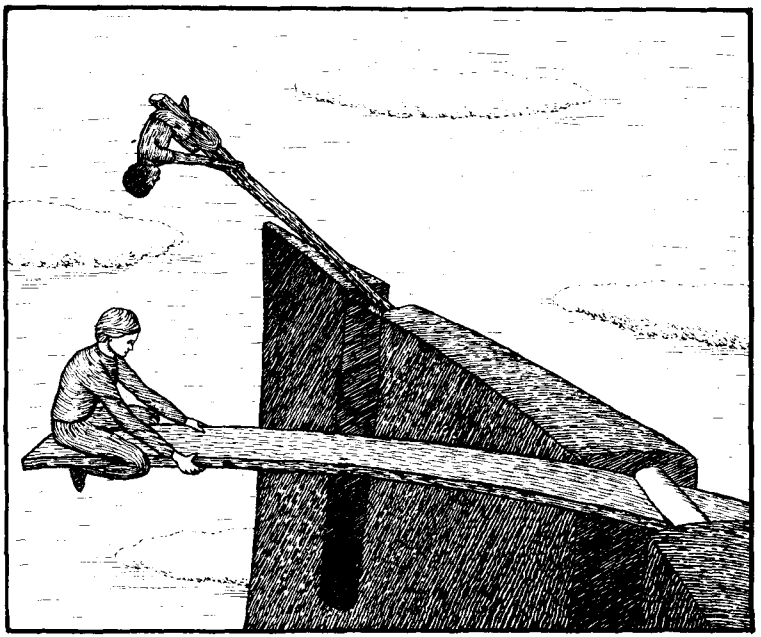

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# NOTICE

*Last year this office received a letter from an English writer who reported that at the racetrack he had put a fiver on a horse named Paris Review—largely a sentimental choice (since he has published in this magazine) but also because the odds (33-1) seemed to beg a flyer bet—and that the horse had finished so far back in the pack he was writing to suggest a warning to others who might be swayed by such sentiments.*

*We have looked into the matter. Paris Review, a chestnut with a handsome star on his forehead, was born in 1972 in the U.S.A. (by Noholme II out of Pride of Paris), bought by John Hay Whitney's Greentree Stables at the Saratoga Stakes, and named by Mr. Whitney soon after.*

*Mr. Whitney (who subscribes to the literary* Paris Review*) takes considerable pains in naming his horses, which is a traditional practice at the Greentree Stables: some of the triumphs of nomenclature over the years have included Hash by Questionnaire out of Delicacy, Stage Door Johnny by Prince John out of Peroxide Blonde, Straphanger by Gallant Man out of Alice Sit Down, and Bribe by Delta Judge out of Paper Gold.*

*As soon as Mr. Whitney pondered and came up with Paris Review the horse was sent to England to be trained by the Hon. Jeremy Tree. Mr. Tree, who has been handling Mr. Whitney's horses abroad since 1967, has his establishment at Marlboro in Wiltshire, southwest of London—lovely, rolling country with long vistas and usually a small wood on top of the downs.*

*Paris Review had a successful year as a two-year-old. He came in 4th in his first race (the Riverhead Maiden Plate) at Kempton, then went on to win the Prince of Wales Stakes at York (see photos), a third in the Flying Childers Stakes, and a first at Ascot in the Cornwallis Stakes. His last race in 1974 was in France—at Longchamps in the Prix du Petit Couvert in which he finished fourth and collected 9000 francs (£790) . . . just about enough to cover the expenses of being sent there.*

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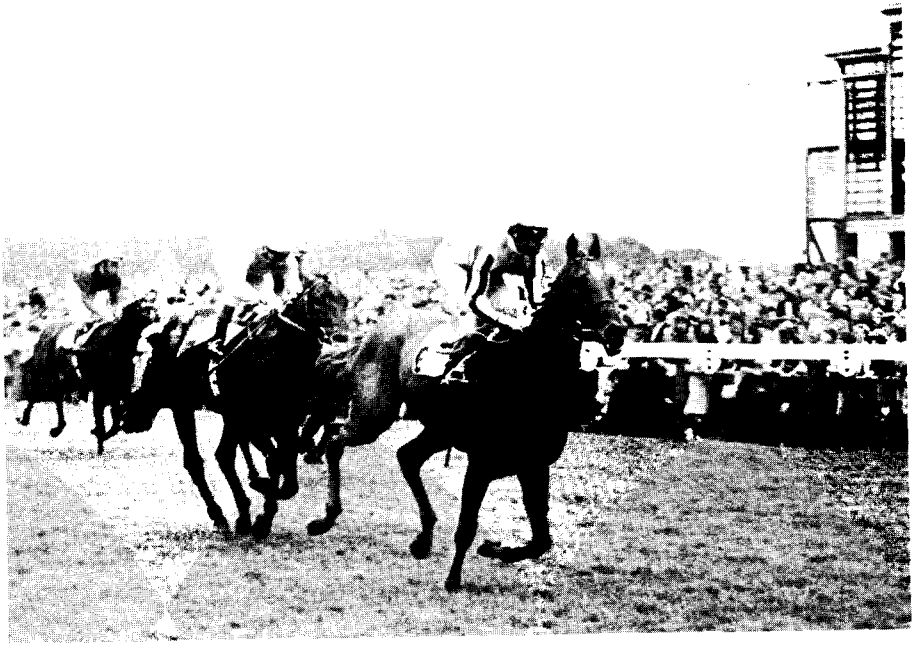

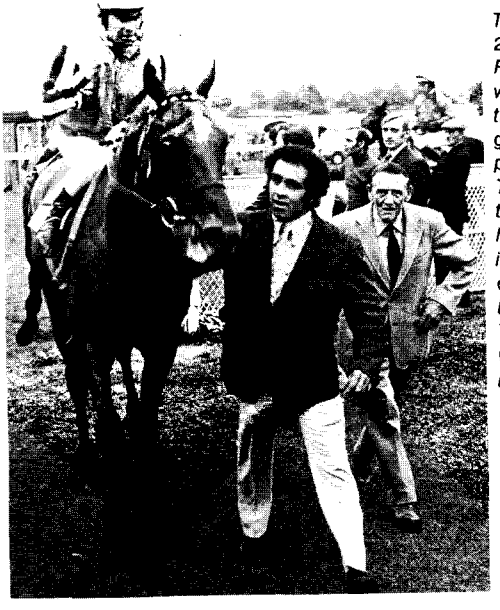

*The top photograph, taken at York on the 22nd of August, 1974, has caught Paris Review just after crossing the finish line a winner—his ears are pricked which shows that his jockey has eased up on him slightly, giving him the alert expression of one who is perhaps a mite startled at what he has done. The second photograph shows him being led to the winner's circle, the jockey (Tony Murray, one of the half-dozen leading riders in England) about to snap his fingers in delight; the groom at the bridle is Johnny Dixon, who has been with trainer Jeremy Tree's organization for twenty years, and the worried-looking man with the large suit coat is the deputy 'traveling man' who looks after Tree's horses on the road.*

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*A divergence: In the early days of the literary* Paris Review, *two or three of those involved with the magazine often went out to Longchamps on race day, not to the grandstand, but to set out a picnic on the grass to talk about the magazine on the far side of the racetrack, spreading down a blanket, in deference to girl friends, just a few feet off the back-stretch fence. It was quiet out there, under the trees, and from time to time the horses would come around from the other side, bunched up, and the jockeys yelling at each other, a sudden quick clatter of sound, and sometimes there was a horse far off the pace who went by alone, the heavy sound of his breathing, and the creak of saddle leather, and the jockey riding up high, letting him coast. And then the girls, who had been leaning up against the fence, would come back to the blanket as the faint cheers went up from the people across the way in the grandstand beginning to urge the horses down the home stretch. There was always too much talk about the magazine; the girls were bored, and when it was time for the next race, they went and waited at the fence for the horses to appear again at the top of the back stretch.*

*Jeremy Tree thought that Paris Review was going to win the Prix de Petit Couvert. "The trouble with Paris Review, as it turned out," he reported recently, "was that although he was a straightforward sort of horse he suffered from what we call 'soft bones'—a painful business that you'd call 'sore shins' in a human. Horses usually grow out of 'soft bones' but Paris Review never did. It bothered him—especially on hard courses . . . and unfortunately in 1975 the ground wasn't as soft as it might have been. Too bad. A lot more rain and he would have been a top sprinter."*

*Paris Review finished out of the money in his last three races in 1975 (presumably the English correspondent was witness to one of these failures), but, as it was, he won a career total of £8101.44 (his best win was at the Cornwallis Stakes (Grade 3) where he won £3,130.44) which is not bad at all. He was sold for a handsome sum (over £20,000) at the turn of this year to a buyer in Australia. He was flown there and now stands at stud . . . The Australians tantalized and hopeful that the Noholme bloodline qualities (Noholme was a famous Australian racer and sire—No Double his most famous issue) might show up successfully in his progeny.*

*This office has resisted the temptation to offer any meaningful parallels between the equine and the literary Paris Reviews despite such suggestive starting points as 'soft bones', 'straight-*

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*forward', and being entered in the Prix de Petit Couvert, their fiscal potentials, and so forth. But it cannot resist (in the spirit of Mr. Whitney's pleasure in finding appropriate names for his colts) passing on to the Australians a few suggestions of titles of poems and stories 'out of' the literary* Paris Review *which could be applied to Paris Review's offspring. We like the following: Looking Backward; Last Comes the Raven; Ho Ho Ho Caribou; Phenomenal Feelings; Travel Dust; Chest of Energy; The Flying Fix (!); Mister Horse. If there were not a limit imposed by the Racing Commission on the number of letters possible in a horse's name, we would offer these two poem titles, Going Downtown to Buy Some Pills, and (our favorite) Nimble Rays of Day Bring Oxygen to the Blood. For the record, the 'sires' of these titles are in order: Robert Bly, Italo Calvino, Joseph Ceravolo, Keith Cohen, Jim Dine, Michael Benedikt, Philip Lamantia, Ron Padgett and the two lengthy titles are by Jack Callom and Tom Clark respectively. I do not think that any of the above would mind having a horse race under their nomenclative banner.*

—G.A.P.

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# Flying

## Alice Adams

"Oh yes, Valerie will like it *very much*," said the energetic young man with blue-black hair and a sharply cleft chin, in an accent that was vaguely 'English'. He and Jacob Eisenman were standing in the large shabby room that overlooked the crashing Pacific, on Kauai, one of Hawaii's outermost and least populated islands.

Jacob later thought that the implications of his tone were a sort of introduction to Valerie, although at the time he had not entirely understood what was being implied. Jacob, the gaunt German who was (incongruously) the owner of this resort. Then he simply wondered why, why *very much*? The young man's clothes were pale, Italian, expensive-looking; it was unlikely that he (or Valerie) would be drawn by the price, which was what drew most of the other guests: older people, rather flabby and initially pale, from places like North Dakota and Idaho and, curiously, Alaska—and a few young couples, wan, tired families with children. These people stayed but were not enthusiastic; they would have preferred a more

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*modern* place (Jacob was subject to radar intuitions). And so this young man's eagerness to register for the room and to pay in advance, which was unnecessary (with a hundred-dollar bill) made Jacob apprehensive, as though he were being invaded—a sense that he dismissed as paranoia, to which he was also subject. But before he could sort out reactions the young man had swung out of the driveway in his orange rented Datsun, presumably to fetch Valerie from the nearby hotel, which he had said they did not like. "So loud, you know?"

In fact for no reason Jacob found his heart beating in jolts, so that quite out of character he went to the bar, unlocked it and poured himself a shot of brandy.

The bar, a narrow slat-roofed structure, was ten winding steps up from the pool, between the rental units and Jacob's own office-apartment library. Curiously, it was almost never used by the Alaskan-North Dakotans, nor the young couples. Nor was the neat functional built-in barbecue, which was adjacent. Most of the units had kitchenettes, but still, wouldn't they sometimes want to cook outside? The barbecue was the last 'improvement' that Jacob had given to his resort. He had spent most of his earlier years in California, going up from Los Angeles to International House, at Berkeley; he later concluded that he had been misled by that background. Only Californians liked barbecues, and no one from California seemed to come his way.

Except for a disastrous visit from his best friend, fat Otto from I. House days, and Otto's new wife—a visit which Jacob had determined not to think about.

The Datsun rushed back into the parking area, and 'Valerie' got out. At first and somewhat distant glance, filtered through the bougainvillea that hung about the bar, she was a delicately built young blond, in dazzling white clothes. Huge dark glasses on a small face. An arrogant walk.

Jacob took a too-large swallow of the rough brandy, which made him cough. So that both people turned to see him there at the bar, at eleven in the morning. ("You aroused such false

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expectations,'' Valerie said, later on.)

The young man, registered as Larry Cobb, waved, and Valerie smiled indefinitely. And, a few minutes later, all the way from the room that he had rented them, Jacob heard a loud harsh voice that boomed, ''But darling, it's absolutely perfect.''

Could that voice have come from such a delicate girl? He supposed it must. Jacob pulled on the large straw hat he always wore—he detested the sun—and hurried away from the bar.

The practical, or surface reason for Jacob's presence in this unlikely setting was that he had inherited it from his parents. However, as Otto had pointed out more than once, he could have sold it when they died, when the place was still in good shape. Now he'd have to spend God knows how much to fix it up—assuming, as Otto did assume, that he wanted to sell.

The Eisenmans had fled Berlin in the early thirties, with their young son and a few remnants of their once-thriving rare-book business; following one of the terrible and familiarly circuitous routes of the time (theirs had included Hong Kong), they finally reached Los Angeles, where they set up shop again and were (finally) successful enough to send their brilliant son to Berkeley. Later they were persuaded to invest in and retire to a warm island resort. It worked out well. They loved Kauaii, where the sun warmed their tired bones and all around them magnificent flowers, flowers hitherto associated with expensive florists, effortlessly bloomed. Birds of paradise. Anthurium. Poinsettias, and of course everywhere the violent colors of bougainvillea and hibiscus. They tended their property lovingly, and, a loving couple, they died peacefully within a week of each other. Jacob flew out to settle the estate and quixotically decided to stay. Well, why not? His Berkeley landlady could, and did, ship his books; besides, he was tired of graduate school, instructorships. And, as he wrote to Otto, ''You know I have a horror of airplane flights. This way I avoid the return trip.''

He promoted Mrs. Wong who had been his parents' house-

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keeper to the position of manageress; he then instructed her to hire some local girls to help with the cleaning up. He was aware—his radar told him—that some of the local islanders imagined Mrs. Wong to be his mistress. He didn't mind, actually he liked her very much, but nothing could have been further from the truth.

Mrs. Wong was plain, round-faced, fat, and slovenly in her dress, and Jacob was sexually fastidious to the point of preferring celibacy to compromise. In fact in his entire life—he was almost fifty—he had had only three love affairs, and none of long duration; he was drawn to women who were violent, brilliant and intense, who were more than a little crazy. Crazy and extremely thin. "Basically I have a strong distaste for flesh," he had once confided to Otto.

"Which would explain your affection for myself," ponderous Otto had chuckled. "Pure masochism, of course."

Their kind of joke, in the good old lost days.

The next afternoon, late.

"It was like labor pains," Valerie loudly and accusingly said; she was speaking of the waves that had knocked her to the sandy bottom of the ocean, and from which the young man, Larry, had grabbed her out. "When Quentin was born, they kept coming back."

She spoke furiously: Why? From behind the bar where Jacob was making their drinks (he had never done this before but the bar girl was sick and Mrs. Wong was somewhere else) he pondered her rage. At being a woman, forced painfully to bear children—blaming Larry for Quentin? No, they were not married. Larry was certainly not the father of Quentin, and she was not that silly. Rage at Larry for having rescued her? No.

She was simply enraged at the sea for having knocked her down. It was an elemental rage, like Ahab's, which Jacob could admire—that was how he felt about the sun.

In the vine-filtered sunlight he could see that Valerie was older than he had thought, was somewhere in her thirties. All across her face, over the small nose, slight rise of cheekbones,

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were tiny white tracings. Tiny scars. An exquisitely repaired face: Jacob did not want to imagine the accident involved but then he did: driving too fast (in a convertible, it would have to have been a convertible) north of Boston, she had gone through a windshield.

Her eyes were large and very dark—at first glance black, then perceived as an extraordinary midnight blue. Her voice was rasping, a whiskey voice, the accent crisply Bostonian. She was wearing something made of stiff white lace, through which a very small brown bikini was visible.

She gulped at her drink: straight gin, with a twist of lime. "God," she said. "I'm all scratched."

Larry asked her, "Does it hurt?"

"No, it just looks funny." She turned to Jacob. "You're so pale. Don't you go swimming at all?"

"No, I hate to swim."

She stared at him for an instant, and then seemed to understand a great deal at once; Jacob could literally feel her comprehension, which reached him like an affectionate hand.

She burst out laughing, a raucous exhilarated laugh. "But that's absolutely marvelous!" she cried out. "I absolutely love it! You also hate the sun—right?"

Jacob nodded. But at the same time that he felt touched he also felt some part of his privacy invaded, which made him uneasy. He had been recognized.

"You must have a marvelous time here," said Larry, attempting a joke.

"I read a lot."

Larry did not like him.

"I need another drink," said Valerie, who probably had noted this too.

An impulse made Jacob say what he had not said before, to guests. "Look, I'm not always around. But if you want a drink that's where the key is." And he pointed to a spot at the top of a beam.

This was said to Larry (to make Larry like him better?) but it was Valerie who smiled and said, "That's really nice of you."

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"We'll keep track," was what Larry said (and finally forgot to do).

Jacob left as soon as he could. He had decided to start re-reading *Moby Dick.*

Valerie liked his shabby place because she was rich, accustomed to grandeur. She was the opposite of upward ascendant—downward descendant? Was she that? Quite possible. Larry was somewhat younger than she—and rich in a different way: he had earned a lot of money, recently, in something fashionable. A record company? TV? He resented Valerie's carelessness, her easy lack of ambitions.

Ahab said, "They think me mad, Starbuck does; but I'm demonic, I am madness maddened! that wild madness that's only calm to comprehend itself . . ."

Valerie had (probably) been married several times. Perhaps a husband had been with her when she smashed up the car? A now-dead husband?

At about eleven the next morning when Jacob approached the bar, Valerie was perched on a high stool, her long thin brown legs drawn up childishly. She had made herself a tall drink. "Won't you join me?"

"I don't drink much—no thanks." Then, to her raised eyebrows he added, "Yesterday was out of character."

"You aroused such false expectations." But she let that go, and then asked, as though it were what they had been talking about for some time, "How do you feel about flying?"

"I hate it; that's one reason I'm here."

In an instant she had taken that in, and her riotous laugh broke out. "God, that's terrific." Then she said, "But what do you do about it?"

"Obviously: I don't fly."

"If I could only understand why I'm so afraid. Larry has driven off to Koloa," she added, irrelevantly. "You'd think

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I'd be afraid to drive." And she told him about her accident, the crashed convertible in which her second husband had been killed—the crash that in some sense he had already seen.

Jacob grasped then that they were communicating on levels that he could not understand at all, that even made him somewhat uncomfortable. He could so vividly see and feel whatever she told him—apparently, in fact, even before she spoke.

"I have some idiot faith that if I could understand it, I wouldn't be afraid any more. Of flying," Valerie said. "I think that's what's called shrink-conditioning. I've even tried to 'associate' to the fear, and I do remember something weird: myself, in a white wicker carriage, a *baby* carriage—how could I remember *that*? Anyway my nurse is pushing it, a young Irish girl, Molly. And we're at the top of a hill in Magnolia, near the shore, and some older kids tell her to let it go. . . ."

But she might as well have stopped talking, because Jacob could see it: a stone-fenced New England landscape, wild roses. A pretty dark maid with a tweed coat pulled over a white uniform. "But she didn't let go," he gently said.

"Of course not. But what in hell does that have to do with being afraid to fly?"

Larry arranged to go deep-sea fishing, near Lihue. Valerie sat by the pool, in a white bikini, with a stack of books. Seeing her there from above, as he conferred with Mrs. Wong about the necessity for a second visit from the plumber, Jacob was aware that he could go down to her and pull up a chair, they could talk all day. But that prospect was too much for him; it made his heart race. Instead he went back to the dim seclusion of his library; he went from *Moby Dick* to Nerval, "Je suis le veuf, le tenebraux . . ." He went out into the sunlight.

He and Valerie had a brief conversation about Jane Austen, whom she was re-reading. "I read her to regain some balance," said Valerie.

"You might try reading her on planes."

She gave him a long speculative look. "What a good idea."

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Pretending busyness, Jacob went back to his office.

In fact all that day was punctuated with such brief conversations. Her non-demanding cool friendliness, her independence made this possible—it matched, or supplemented his vast diffidence.

She asked, "How is it up around Hanalea, the northern coast?"

"I don't know. I've never been there."

"God, you're absolutely marvelous."

"Do you think it's a fear that someone will throw you out of the sky? maybe God?"

"Alas, poor Icarus."

"Yes, that's sort of it. As though you shouldn't be up there, so high."

Sometime in the middle of the afternoon he found her at the bar with a drink.

"You know what I really like about this place?" she asked. "The whales. God, they're terrific, spouting out there."

"Yes." Her tan intensified the whiteness of her scars, making a sort of jigsaw of her face. Her eyes were dark and wild, and after a little while Jacob realized that she was drunk, or nearly so: like most people, he had trouble recognizing conditions foreign to himself. It had taken him a long time to see that Otto's wife, Joanne, was very stupid; at first he had thought her crazy, which was something he knew more about. In fact she was both.

He said, "A long time ago a woman came here who hated the whales, she was terrified of them."

"*Really*?" Valerie leaned forward, toward his face, so that he caught a whiff of exotic perfume. Of musk.

"It finally turned out that she had them confused with sharks, and thought they would swim in and bite her."

"*God*."

"She was exceptionally stupid. My best friend's wife."

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The first surprise had been Otto's extreme prosperity, as evinced by a casual mention of the purchase of several condominiums, on the peninsula south of San Francisco. "Well, I have to have them for tax shelters." In fact he had come to Hawaii to talk to a group of businessmen in Honolulu who were interested in some California coastal property. Not to see Jacob. The second surprise, probably not wholly unconnected with the first, was Joanne. Joanne from San Antonio, with her raven hair and milk-white skin, her rosebud mouth. (Otto's taste in women had never been original). Big girlish breasts. A tiny well-focussed mind. ("Oh, I just think you're so *smart* not to waste your money on paint and fixing things up—I mean, who'd care?" And, "Oh, I just love all these darling yellow-brown people, they don't look a bit like darkies.") Over her head Jacob had at first sought Otto's eyes, but Otto wasn't listening; in fact (Jacob remembered too late) he had never enjoyed talking or listening to women—he probably didn't hear a word she said. But Jacob heard it all, each abrasive idiocy, delivered in that nasal soprano. "Those are really whales out there? But how does anybody dare to in swimming?"

One curious—in fact to Jacob incomprehensible—facet of Joanne's character was her imperviousness to coldness on another's part, to slights. Not that Jacob really slighted her, but surely his politeness came across coldly? Actually he couldn't stand her, and he found it hard to pretend otherwise. But she continued her bubbling smiles and winks (Christ, *winks*!) at him; on any pretext at all she stood so close that her glossy head touched his shoulder—she would introduce a sentence by touching his arm. Incredible! Jacob considered (and instantly dismissed) the insane possibility that she was sexually drawn to him, but, modesty aside, he found that unlikely. He had none of the qualities that would have drawn her to Otto, for example: he was not rich or ebullient or pleasure-loving (God knows, not that). Also he was bony, his dry skin deeply lined, whereas Otto was sleek and fat. No, he decided, she was simply behaving as she always did with men.

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Such was his estimate of Joanne, and of their situation up to the final terrible night of which he would not think: the knock at his door (he had somehow known that it was Joanne, had frighteningly thought that Otto must be sick). But, "You can't imagine how sound your old friend sleeps," she had said, pushing past him in her frilly thigh-length gown, beneath which unleashed fat breasts bounced. "I thought we could have a tiny drinkie together," she said. "I just feel as though I hardly know you at all." Her young face shone with joyous self-adulation.

Jacob couldn't believe it, not then or later (now) remembering. How had he got rid of her? He had muttered something about a strep throat, clutching at his neck. An insane impulse that had worked: Joanne was terrified of germs.

Most men of course would not have sent her away, and so friendship dictated that Jacob inform Otto. "You are married to a submoron nymphomaniac. Even if you don't listen to her conversation. She is a bad person. She will do you harm." Of course the next day he said nothing of the sort, and for all Jacob knew Otto and Joanne were still what is known as 'happily married'. Otto rarely mentioned her in letters.

"One encouraging thing I recently read," said Valerie, beginning to slur a little, "is that if you fall from more than six thousand feet—or was it sixty thousand—you die of a heart attack before you hit the ground. If you call that encouraging."

"I suppose you could."

"Well, I do. Christ, I'm sleepy. I'm going in for a nap."

She walked off unsteadily, between the clamorously brilliant blooms. Jacob heard the slam of her screen door.

That night, as he restlessly re-began *The Wanderer* (he was slipping from book to book, a familiar bad sign) Jacob could hear them at the barbecue (its first use); in fact he could smell their steak. Valerie and Larry. Her rowdy laugh, his neat clipped voice.

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Then it turned into a quarrel; Jacob caught the tone but not the words. Very quietly he got up and opened his door. Without a sound he went out, walking away from them through the dark until he could hear nothing at all. Down the small road, past all the oversized blooming plants he walked, toward the small arc of beach, the surfers' beach, now coldly grey-white in the dark. There he stood on the mound of black lava rock, regarding the shining waves, their wicked curl before breaking, until one huge wave—as large, he imagined, as a giant whale—crashed near his rock and drove him back, and he started home. As he reached his door everything was still, no voices from the bar or anywhere. Only the surf.

He didn't see Valerie (or Larry) all the next day until late afternoon when together they approached the bar, where Jacob had been talking to his liquor supplier, Mr. Mederious; he needed to order more gin. Valerie and Larry were merry, friendly with each other, holding hands. Sand dried in their uncombed hair, his so dark, hers pale.

"We found the most fabulous beach . . ."

". . . absolutely private, no one there at all."

". . . really beautiful."

They had made love on the beach.

"I could stay here forever," said Valerie, dreamily.

"Baby, some of us have to work," Larry said, with a kind of affection. But of course this was an issue between them. Also, Larry would have liked to marry her, and she didn't want to get married, having done it so often before.

Jacob knew everything.

Re-embarked on his own Jane Austen, he found that at last he was able to concentrate. He spent the next few days with *Emma, Persuasion, Northanger Abbey*—pure delight, a shining impeccable world, like Mozart, or Flemish painting.

When next he saw Valerie, in still another bikini, she was even browner. She was beside the pool; Larry had gone fishing again. She looked clear-eyed, younger. And Jacob heard

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himself think (ridiculously): she should stay here, it agrees with her.

Beginning out of context (a way she had) she told Jacob, "When we were in Honolulu we saw the most amazing man on the sidewalk. Dressed in red-white-and-blue striped clothes, with an Uncle Sam hat. And sandwich boards with really crazy things written on them. Peace signs that were labelled 'Chicken Tracks Of A Coward'. Something about Abortion and Murder. Really extraordinary—the superpatriot. I could not figure out what he was about."

Of course Jacob could see the man. Hunched over, lost.

"You know," she said, "I've got to get into some kind of work." Her harsh laugh. "I might even try to finish school. Last time around I got married instead."

"I think you should."

She laughed again. "God, Larry will die."

"He will?"

"He's not strong on intellectual women."

One night, as Jacob lay half asleep on his narrow hard bed (his monk's bed, as he thought of it) he heard what he imagined to be a knock on his door. At first he thought: Good Christ—Joanne? But of course Joanne was nowhere near, and then his heart lept up as he reached for the ancient canvas trenchcoat that served him as a robe, and he went to open the door.

No one there. (But had there been?)

He stood still in the starry flowering night, listening for any sound.

Someone was at the bar, and he walked in that direction.

Valerie. And at the instant that he saw her he also saw and heard the orange Datsun start up and swing out of the driveway, into the sleeping night.

Valerie, in a tailored red silk robe, was applying ice cubes to one eye, the cubes neatly wrapped in a paper napkin—her gesture was practiced, expert. She said, "You catch me at a disadvantage. I seem to have walked into the proverbial door."

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"Can I . . .?" He was not sure what he had meant to offer.

"No, I'll be all right. Care for a drink?"

She had one already, something dark on ice.

Jacob poured himself a shot of brandy.

She said, "You know, it's too bad that children are brought up with so many globes for toys. They see the world as a small ball full of oceans, with those insecure patches of land."

She spoke with great intensity, her visible dark eye huge. She was not drunk but Jacob sensed that earlier she had been. He wanted to ask her if she had, in fact, knocked on his door, but he did not.

She said, "Tonight I was thinking about those old globes, and how these islands look on them, and I thought we might fall off into space. Do you think I'm going crazy?"

"No."

"God, I may never get back on a plane."

Jacob wanted to say, "Don't. Don't go anywhere, stay with me. Read all my books, and I'll send for more. Talk to me when you feel like talking. Stay."

Valerie stood up, stretching. She still kept the side of her face that by now must be swollen and discolored turned away. She said, "I think I can sleep now. See you in the morning."

In the morning he could say to her that she must stay.

Jacob went off to bed and while he was still reading (impossible then to sleep) he heard the Datsun return. Stop. Slam.

In the morning Valerie and Larry came to Jacob's office together, both dressed for travel—she in dark blue linen, huge glasses covering whatever had happened to her eye, Larry in pale grey.

They had simply and suddenly decided to leave. They felt that they had to get back. Larry's new TV show, 'Quentin'.

Jacob and Valerie shook hands (their only touch). Her hand was small and hard and strong, and she wore a lot of rings. "God, I'm absolutely terrified," she said, with a beautiful quick smile. "All those flights."

Jacob said, "You'll be all right," and he smiled too. Goodby.

But he was not at all sure of what he said. All that day he was terrified of her flights.

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*Albert Stainton*

## THE PAIN MACHINE

Model C-24,
developed exclusively for us
by a team of expert engineers
all serving life contracts,
registers various types of pain—
chiefly in the brain,
most often in the anterior lobes
but sometimes extending
some distance down the cortex,
as soon as you turn it on.
The images on the screen,
in relation to their colors,
alone create this effect.
There are absolutely no wires,
electrodes, or other
physical connections
between the mechanism itself
and the viewers.
The pains so produced
are not, of course, excruciating—
more abstract,
one might say,
like the geometrical designs
on the screen—
yet real,
certainly very real,
as attested

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by the somewhat disturbed expressions
of the viewers
during numerous experiments,
and their habit,
never fully accounted for
by staff psysiologists,
of turning to one another
almost as if by accident,
and letting their heads
fall forward.

## THE RINGS

I went to the Lost & Found
in the caverns of the vast South Station
to recover my ring, and found
black umbrellas lining the walls
row above row, to the vaulted ceiling.
The attendant showed me to a table
where the rings were kept—
some gold, but most of heavier metals—
brass, even iron, all more or less
in the same crude style—
all men's.
I tried to mask the disappointment I felt
at not seeing my own among them,
but I selected one anyway,
slipped it into my pocket,
and started down one of those dreary streets

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lined with lunch bars and
moth-eaten stores
that fanned out from the Station
in endless directions,
and sold it at a second-hand dealer's
on one of the many corners.
I got only $5—
a fraction of what it was worth—
but I went back to the Station the next day,
got another and sold it,
and so on,
never receiving more than a 5 or a 10
for rings worth 30 or 40,
but since it was enough to get me by
I never complained,
and though some of the weeks were slow—
sometimes I would find
the plank table empty in front of me
and I could almost feel
the attendant smile
half in sympathy behind me—
another ring would always be there
the next day or the next—
sometimes more—
so that though I didn't make much money
during that long, dreary time,
I always had somewhere to go
and something to do.

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*Patricia Goedicke*

## THOUGH IT LOOKS LIKE A THROAT IT IS NOT

The shape of loneliness is a hole
By definition, to be filled.

At the outer edges of the hole
The lizard of jealousy sits
Licking his cold lips

For the shape of loneliness is a hole
With teeth on either side.

In the middle of everyone's body
Like an empty house, like a coffin

Though it looks like a throat it is not,
Though it looks like a cunt it is not,

Nothing glows in it but heartburn,
Nothing lives in it but hot air,
Gulps of it, rushing through the passages

Occasionally a sigh hurtles through it
Like the roar of a buffalo in a wind tunnel

So that the thin shell of self pity all around it
Shivers a little, and whines

So that it develops a red nose
Complaining to itself, and muttering
Gradually its conversations become more boring

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So that everyone walks right by it without looking,
Nobody even bothers to fall in it
By accident,

Tears water it, profusely
Eventually sadness swamps everything,

Out there among the stars
And the light years between stars

Even the last tiny pinprick of fire at the bottom
Soggy as a landslide sloughs away
To the other side of space

For the shape of loneliness is a hole
Without any edges, finally

The entire universe whistles through it.

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*Jill Grossman*

## POEM

I read my cheap novels again
and again I cry: What a beautiful death!
Indeed. That's all I long for. My last
request will be: Give me a beautiful death!
and give it to me quick.
If I don't say please or thank-you
don't be mad. There's an unwritten law
inscribed on the tombs of Old Cathay
that reads: "Let the dead be rude" and why not?
But back to my misery: I dream each night
of a long straight road littered with sunglasses.
I'm in the back seat of a light
blue convertible screaming: I want

to escape, sail to the edge and jump
as the ivory steamships wave. But I've been told
the world is round, and you and I are nothing
more than giant handfuls of atoms clicking
together. Have you heard the music of the spheres?
It's one note played over and over.
Yes, you and I will meet someday
in the tourist section of the astral plane. We'll float
like heavenly barges and spit
on the men below. When they get good
and mad enough they'll say: Aren't they rude?
and we'll smile, recalling
the green silk lining of our caskets.

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# EPILEPTICS ANONYMOUS

At my doctor's insistence I joined Epileptics Anonymous. They look the same as anyone else, except for the small blue clouds brooding in the corners of their eyes.
We talk about our seizures and rate them on a scale from one to ten. Most of us are in the four to six (average) range, but you do see a few eights and nines (exceptionals) wandering about with haughty expressions and gold-plated tongue-depressors placed jauntily in their breast pockets.

On special occasions we have banquets with guest speakers. We're served tomato juice in paper cups and crescent-shaped rolls (euphemistically known as Van Gogh's ears), which we nibble politely while the Director unclenches a fork from between the speaker's teeth.
The speaker is always very nonchalant about it all, and later finishes his cheesecake with the mangled fork. We applaud his refinement, but secretly dream of the Perfect Seizure: to abandon oneself forever to the electrical rhythms and violet smoke-raptures!

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*F. Keith Wahle*

## SONNET

You realize, even as you start this
that it won't end up as a sonnet—
and by "sonnet" I don't mean just a poem
in fourteen lines—or all right, fourteen lines, if
you insist, and iambic pentameter,
with a couplet at the end, but that's not
all it takes to make a sonnet;
a real sonnet has a certain movement
of ideas, a special way the argument
reveals itself, with a shift in the point
of view at the middle of the poem,
or just past the middle, at the end
of the eighth line. This goes for either the
Italian or Elizabethan form.
And at the library you can get those
anthologies from the twenties and thirties
of local poets, meaning amateurs,
and they all seem to be writing sonnets,
or what they thought were sonnets; sonnets
on every imaginable subject:
Abraham Lincoln, Dante, Italy,
the months, the holidays, Lake Erie, death
and the death of children, larks, cardinals,
seashells, insomnia, Elizabeth
Tudor, and Mary Stuart, everything.
They even wrote sonnets about writing
sonnets. I found one about why
Shakespearean sonnets are better than
Italian sonnets. But none of these sonnets
are any good. The rhymes are all in the
right place, but the people who wrote them
had no idea what a sonnet can do

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or even what poetry can do.
So the hell with those assholes. They're all dead
now anyway, or soon will be, thank goodness.
In more recent times the term sonnet
has been used very freely, and the form
has become extremely loose. But some
of the modern sonnets are very good,
such as Robert Lowell's sonnet on
Harpo Marx or his sonnet on Ezra Pound.
But one keeps getting back to the question
of writing, how it is done, and whether
it is fun. Certainly there are other things
that are more fun—going to bed with
attractive men or women, or eating
Chinese food. One thinks of the T'ang Dynasty,
the golden age of Chinese poetry—
in three hundred years, some of the best
poets ever in any language.
Li Po is the best known in this country,
though Tu Fu was probably a better poet,
and Po Chu I was more versatile.
But even after these three were dead, there
were many great and beautiful poets;
like Han Shan, the Cold Mountain hermit,
and Li Ho, the demon poet; and we
must not forget the great landscape poet,
Wang Wei, who was contemporary with
Li Po. Ezra Pound's translations of Li Po
are the most exciting in English,
though perhaps not the most exacting
from the sinologist's point of view.
Li Po was an habitual drunkard,
and wrote in a style that was rather free,
at least by the standards of ancient China.
Tu Fu, on the other hand, wrote in
a style called "regulated verse" (lü-shih),
which is an eight-line form with even
stricter rules than our sonnet, and died,
according to the legend, from eating

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Chinese food, or rather, too much Chinese food.
He was trapped in the mountains by a flash flood,
and after starving for several days
he overate at a banquet and died
when the rice swelled up and ruptured his
intestine. This story may not be true.
Li Po and Tu Fu were great friends in their
lifetimes, just as Pound and Yeats were great friends,
and went to Chinese restaurants together,
all of which leads one to ask oneself,
"Will I ever be a truly great poet,
or even the friend of a great poet?"
Not likely. But to be a good poet
may be quite within the reach of many people.
It seems to require initially
an ability to listen with trust
to the little voices you have inside,
the voices that tell you what to do,
and how to write, like the one right now that's
saying, "This is no sonnet, you damn fool;
it doesn't even look like a sonnet."

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*Paul Wilner*

## SERIOUS BUSINESS

This is what's known
as SERIOUS BUSINESS.
That's why the title line
is underlined, to underscore
the importance of this.
This is serious business.
This is heartbreak, agony,
torture, death-by-water,
this is not kidding around.
This is in the woods of Massachusetts,
this, this all is serious business.
It's serious. This, this is
serious business. This is
nervous breakdown, this is
babblings to the wind, this
is I don't know myself, this
shows serious signs of disorientation.
This is a big white page
with blood all over the middle.
This is revolutionary suicide,
revolutionary homicide, this,
this, is serious business. Serious
business. This is serious business.

I, I am not serious.
You understand.
You, you are not serious.
Yes I understand.
We, we are not serious.
It is understood.
But serious business

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accomplishes the business of the state.
It is serious business that just
broke up my marriage. It is serious
business that telephones me through
the air, wind whistling, poles cracking,
ears ringing, Alexander Graham Bell.
Serious business disrupts my class at
school, and serious business upset my
boss at work today, and serious business
makes us talk about our relationship
and serious business lays a bomb at the
foot of the church and then prays.
You and I, we are not serious business.
I don't even know who I'm rooting for—

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*Adam LeFevre*

## FACTS ABOUT NATURE
## I

Eurydice's Hairpin. Cassandra's Curse.

There are the names of wildflowers
that come out just at night,
in the remotest woods,
during no moon.

You can't hunt them with a flashlight or a match.
They'll get wind of any glimmer and close up
and slip back into the earth.

Even the invisible light of your own eyes
will frighten them.

You have to go on hands and knees, eyes closed,
groping delicately with your fingertips.

It's painful.

When you come home
at sunrise, hands bloody, forehead bumped
and blue, the knees of your pants worn through,
your loved ones call you "crazy idiot".

But never mind.
They are not your loved ones.
These flowers are.

And when you find them,
when you hold them in your hands,
you get one wish, beginning
*I don't want.*

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## II

Ants do not eat fingers.

In South America there are ants
the size of your hand.

They grow that way
because of the warm, moist climate.

If you are walking in the rain-
forests down in South America,
you will walk under giant umbrella trees
beneath which fingers
are neatly piled.

That means the ants have been there.

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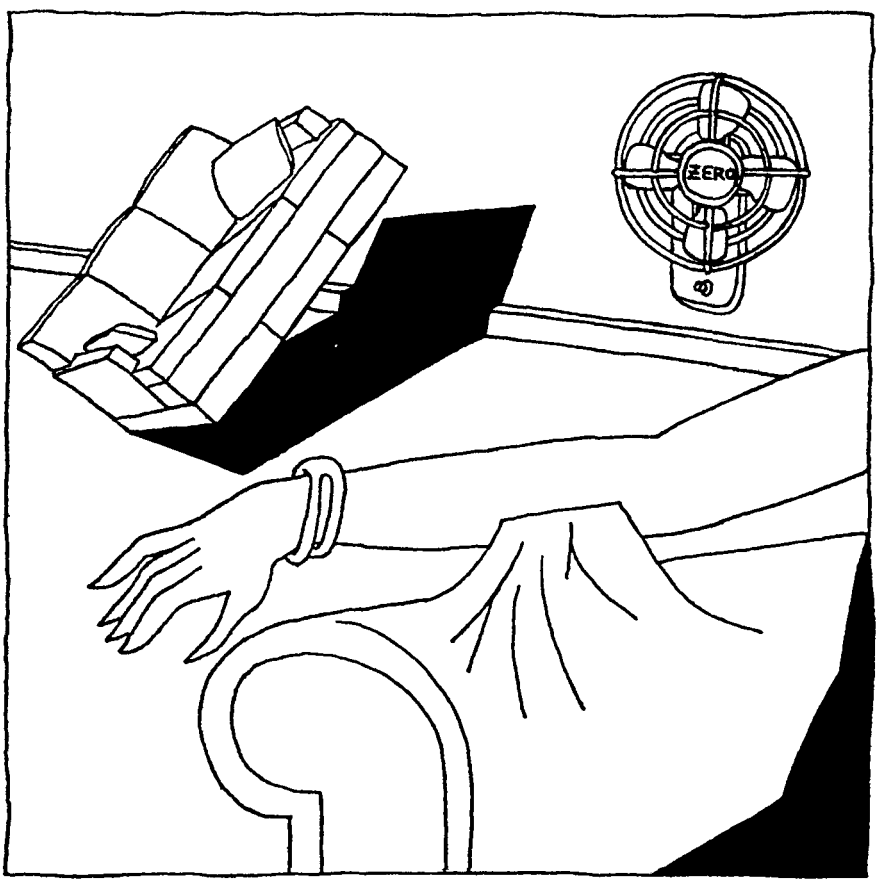
Heinz Emigholz

# A Portfolio

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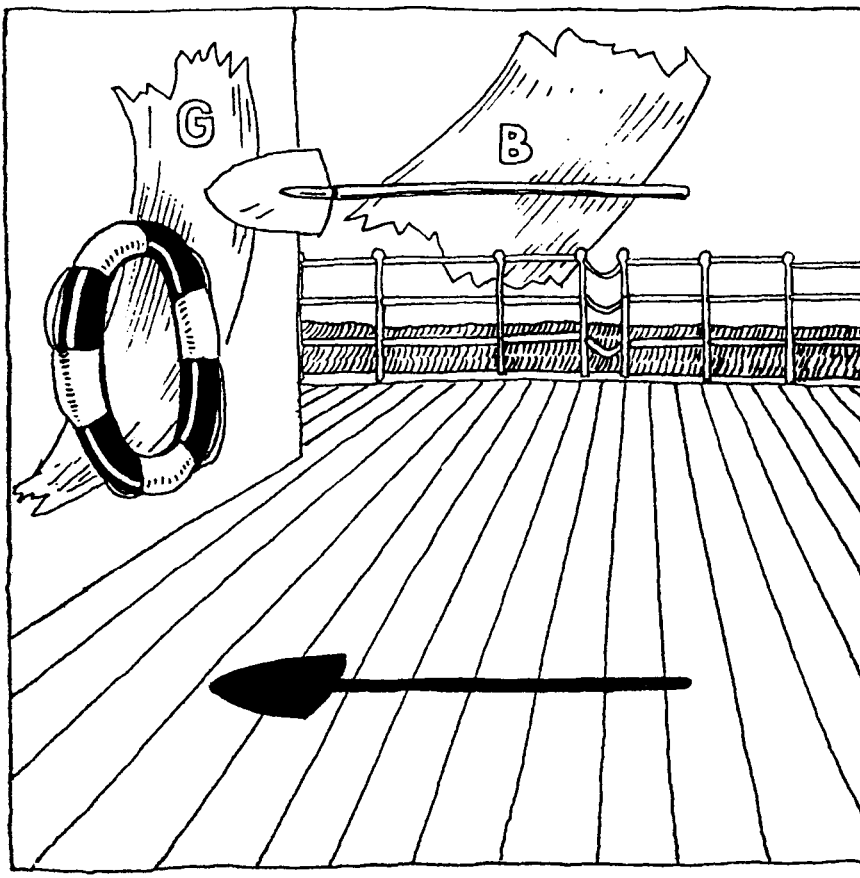


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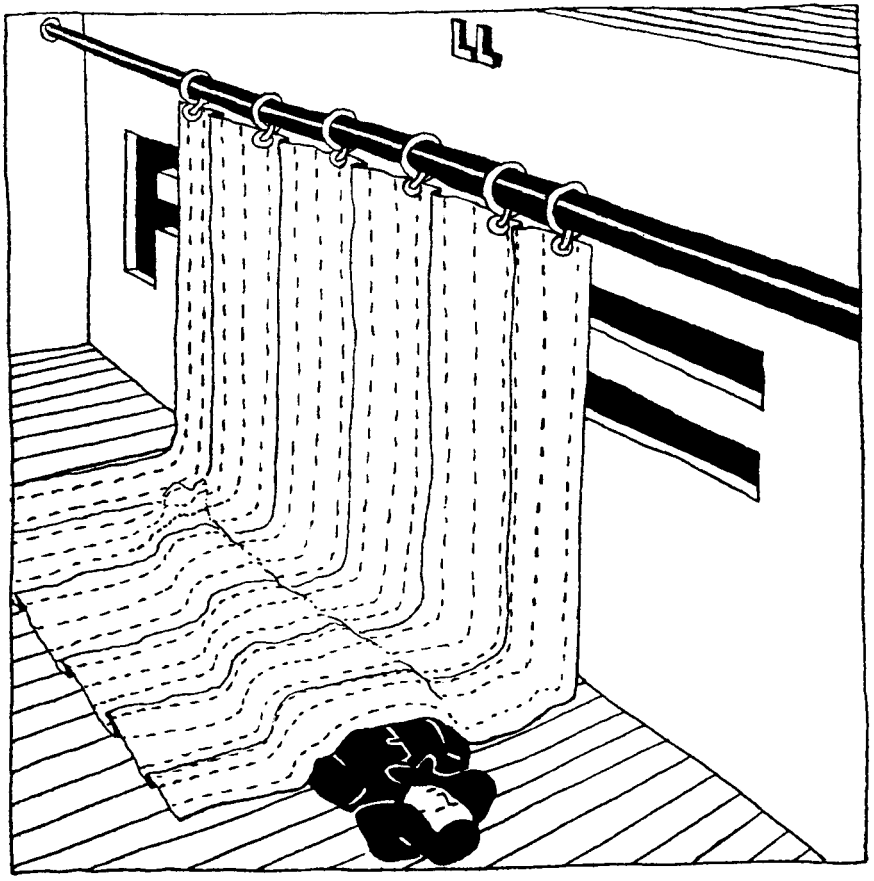

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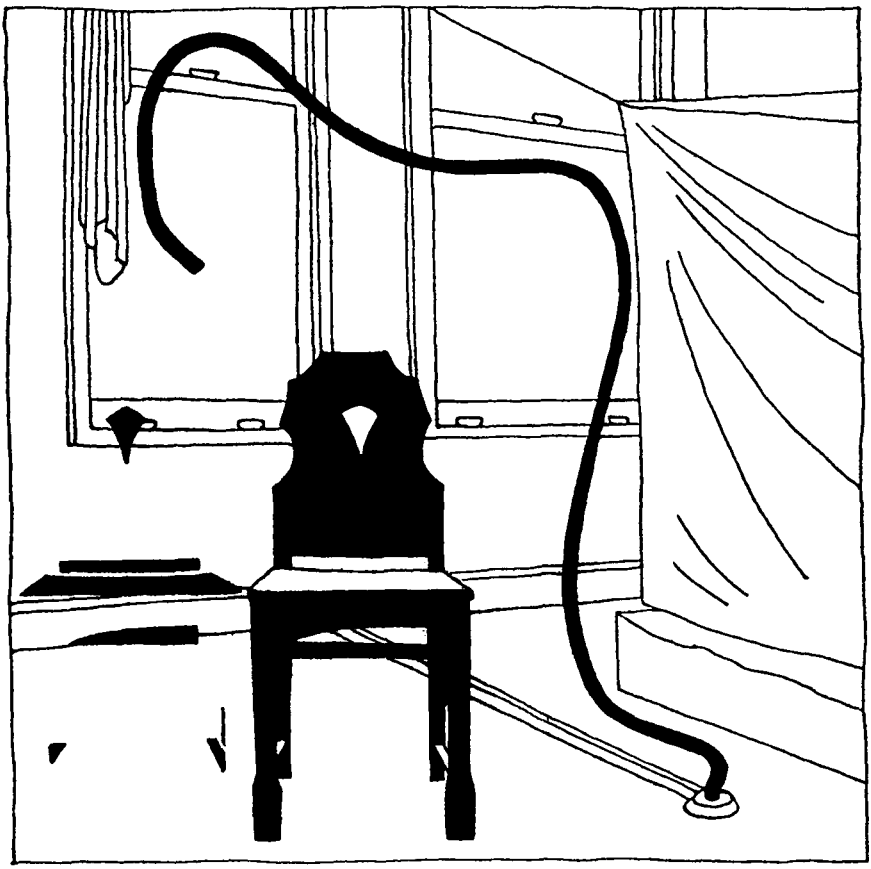

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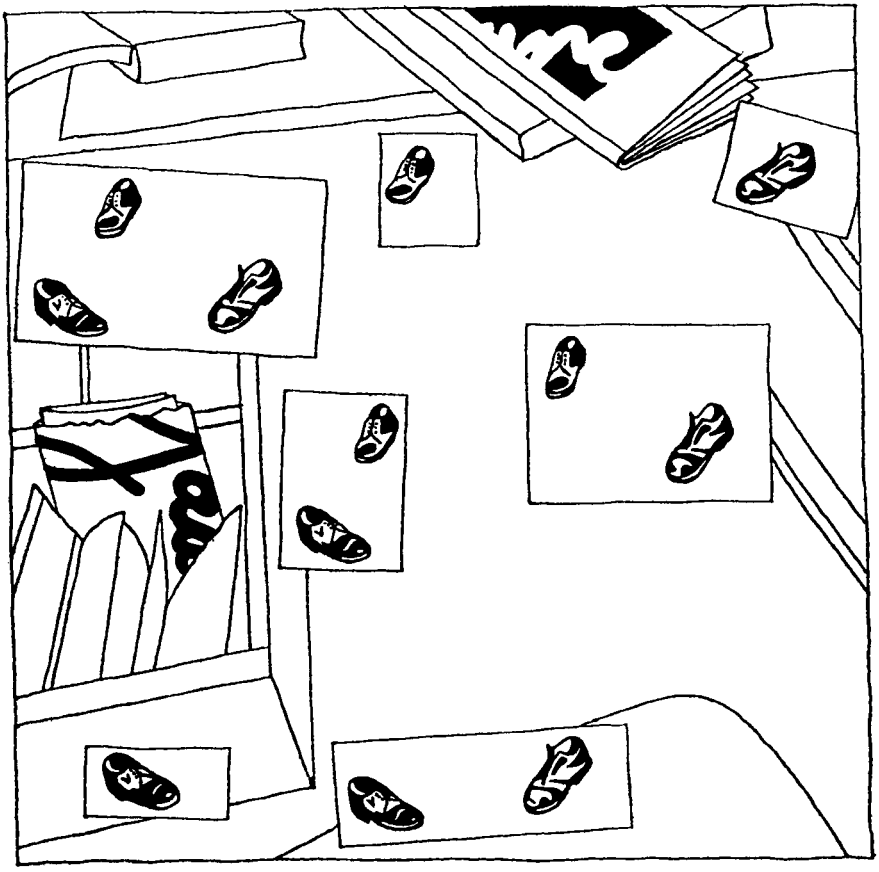

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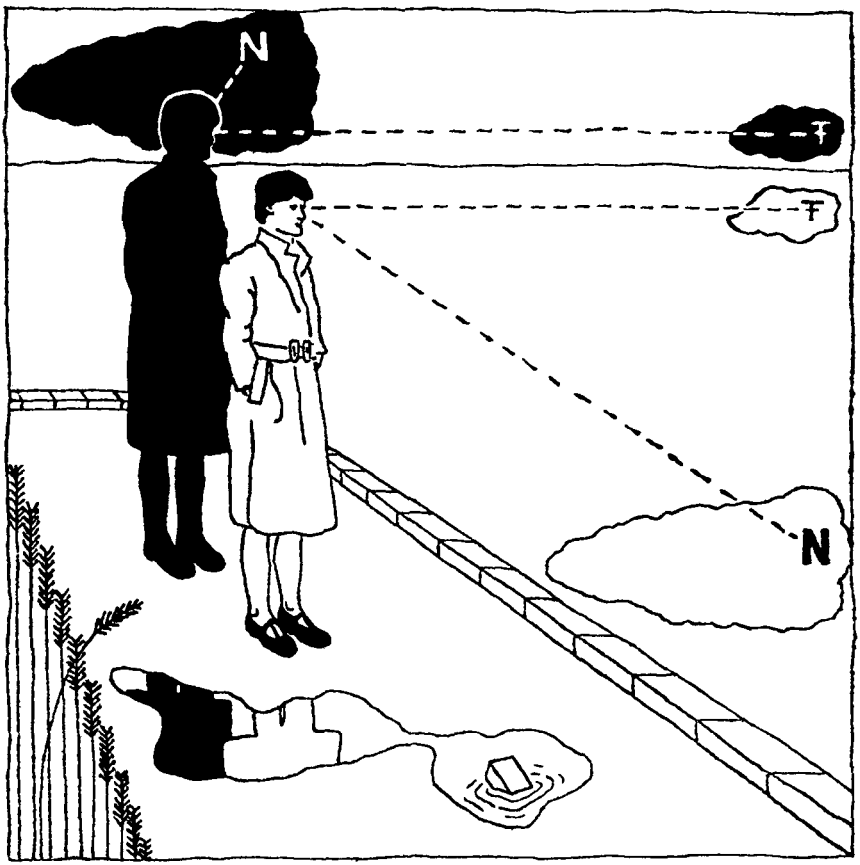


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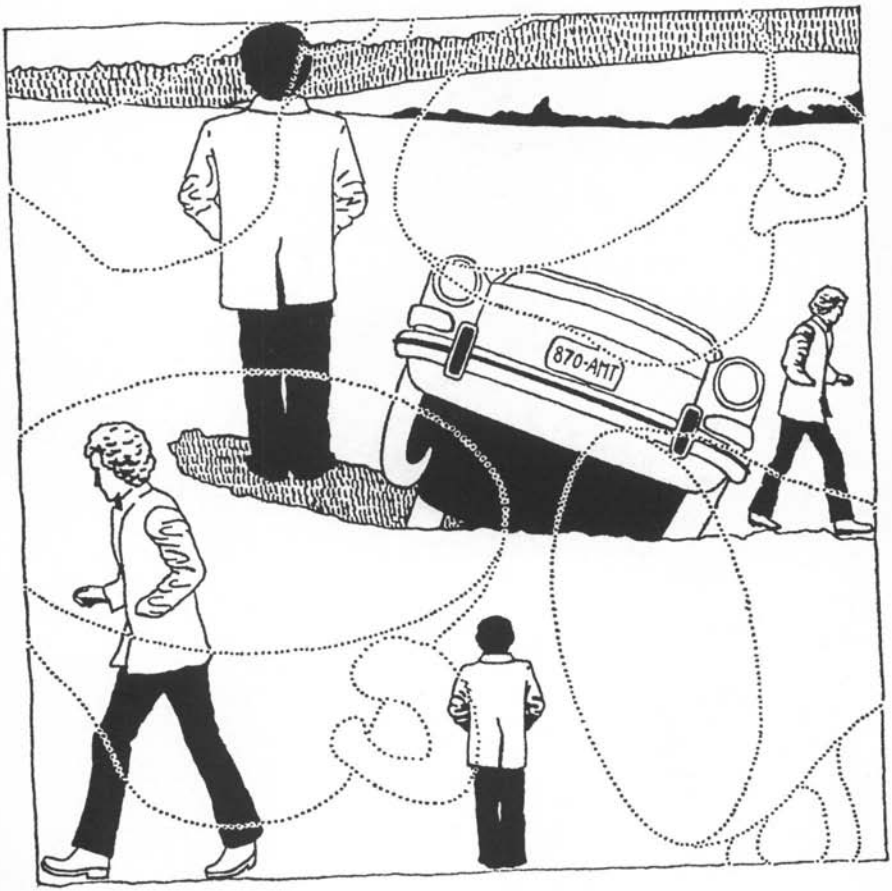


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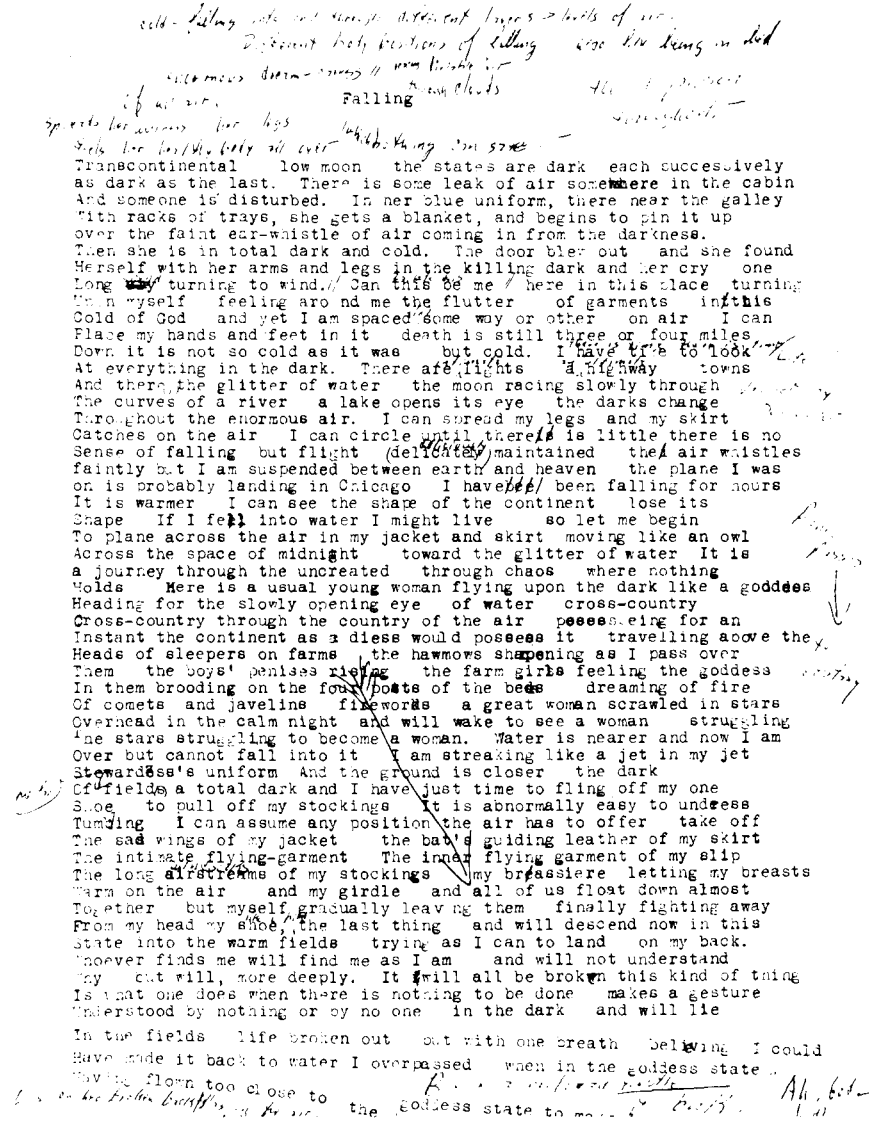

Falling

Transcontinental low moon the states are dark each successively
as dark as the last. There is some leak of air somewhere in the cabin
And someone is disturbed. In her blue uniform, there near the galley
With racks of trays, she gets a blanket, and begins to pin it up
over the faint ear-whistle of air coming in from the darkness.
Then she is in total dark and cold. The door blew out and she found
Herself with her arms and legs in the killing dark and her cry one
Long way turning to wind. Can this be me here in this place turning
Upon myself feeling around me the flutter of garments in this
Cold of God and yet I am spaced some way or other on air I can
Place my hands and feet in it death is still three or four miles
Down it is not so cold as it was but cold. I have tried to look
At everything in the dark. There are lights a long way towns
And there the glitter of water the moon racing slowly through
The curves of a river a lake opens its eye the darks change
Throughout the enormous air. I can spread my legs and my skirt
Catches on the air I can circle until there is little there is no
Sense of falling but flight (delicately) maintained the air whistles
faintly but I am suspended between earth and heaven the plane I was
on is probably landing in Chicago I have been falling for hours
It is warmer I can see the shape of the continent lose its
Shape If I fell into water I might live so let me begin
To plane across the air in my jacket and skirt moving like an owl
Across the space of midnight toward the glitter of water It is
a journey through the uncreated through chaos where nothing
Holds Here is a usual young woman flying upon the dark like a goddess
Heading for the slowly opening eye of water cross-country
Cross-country through the country of the air possessing for an
Instant the continent as a diess would possess it travelling above the
Heads of sleepers on farms the hawmows sharpening as I pass over
Them the boys' penises rising the farm girls feeling the goddess
In them brooding on the four posts of the beds dreaming of fire
Of comets and javelins fireworms a great woman scrawled in stars
Overhead in the calm night and will wake to see a woman struggling
The stars struggling to become a woman. Water is nearer and now I am
Over but cannot fall into it I am streaking like a jet in my jet
Stewardess's uniform And the ground is closer the dark
Of fields a total dark and I have just time to fling off my one
Shoe to pull off my stockings It is abnormally easy to undress
Tumbling I can assume any position the air has to offer take off
The sad wings of my jacket the bat's guiding leather of my skirt
The intimate flying-garment The inner flying garment of my slip
The long airstreams of my stockings my brassiere letting my breasts
Warm on the air and my girdle and all of us float down almost
Together but myself gradually leaving them finally fighting away
From my head my shoe, the last thing and will descend now in this
State into the warm fields trying as I can to land on my back.
Whoever finds me will find me as I am and will not understand
My cut will, more deeply. It will all be broken this kind of thing
Is what one does when there is nothing to be done makes a gesture
Understood by nothing or by no one in the dark and will lie

In the fields life broken out but with one breath believing I could
Have made it back to water I overpassed when in the goddess state
Having flown too close to
the goddess state to

*Page one of "Falling," courtesy of Washington University at St. Louis*

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# James Dickey
# The Art of Poetry XX

*Jerry Robertson*

*In 1960—when he was thirty-eight—an age at which most men have abandoned pretenses at having creative gifts, James Dickey published his first book of poetry,* Into the Stone, *a Scribners* Poets of Today *volume which he shared with two other unknown poets, Paris Leary and Jon Swan. In the years since Dickey has become one of the most powerful voices in American poetry. His many books include* Drowning with Others *(1962),* Helmets *(1964),* Buckdancer's Choice *(1965), for which he won the National Book Award,* Poems 1957-67 *(1967),* The Eye-Beater's *(1970), and* Sorties *(1971). In 1966 he served as Poetry Consultant for the Library of Congress.*

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*But ironically, it was fiction, not poetry, that made Dickey's name a household word. After toying with* Deliverance *for nearly ten years, he finished it in a great thrust of energy in 1969. By the middle of 1970,* Deliverance *was on top of the nation's best-seller lists. He later wrote the screenplay for the popular motion picture.*

*Those who knew Dickey closely, however, were aware that* Deliverance, *while a publishing phenomenon, was not the center of his creative objective. He once remarked to a student, "'The Eye Beaters' is worth a hundred* Deliverances."

*This interview took place in Dickey's Lake Katherine home in Columbia, South Carolina where he is serving as Poet-in-Residence for the University of South Carolina. It was recorded in three sessions (two in May 1972 and one in May 1974) in his huge den with an inch-thick gray carpet and an appropriate wall of books. Dickey, a large, bearish man, has a voice to match. Throughout the tapings he poised on his chair's edge, sucking air through his teeth in anger at incompetent poets, and often shaking with laughter at good one-liners. On the first day he wore a pink shirt with French cuffs; the next sessions found him garbed in jackets and pants of leather or suede. After each day's taping, Dickey played the guitar, took his interviewer canoeing or demonstrated his skill with the bow and arrow. He is adroit with all three, perhaps excelling on the six-string. He has contributed numerous guitar tapes to the Library of Congress in addition to providing some of the music for "Deliverance."*

*This fall, his long poem,* The Zodiac, *will be published, followed soon after by his second novel,* Alnilam.

INTERVIEWER

You have said you got where you are today, an established poet and novelist, "the hardest way possible, unsolicited manuscripts." Can you tell us about it?

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DICKEY

It was very difficult to do; I didn't have any precedent; I didn't know any writers, editors, publishers, or agents. They might have been in the outer part of the solar system as far as I was concerned. I just knew that I like to write and I had some ideas that I thought might work out as poems. So I wrote them, then sent them around. As they say, I could have papered my bedroom wall with the rejections.

I began to send stuff out when I was at Vanderbilt and the only way that I knew where to send anything was to go into the stacks of the library and get a magazine out that I admired, like the *Sewanee Review*, and get the address off the masthead and send the poem to the guy who was the editor at that address. I sent poems in and I kept getting back these form rejections. In 1948 or 1949 I remember with what wonder I saw a true human hand-writing on the rejection slip. It said, "Not bad."

INTERVIEWER

What made you decide to commit yourself to writing?

DICKEY

Like most American writers I kind of backed into it. I liked poetry; I liked to read it. I'm the kind of person who can't be interested in a thing without wanting to see if I can't get out there and do a little of it myself. If I see somebody shooting arrows, I want to get a bow and see if I can shoot some myself.

INTERVIEWER

Did the legendary Vanderbilt crowd have much effect on you?

DICKEY

There is no sense in which it could be said that I was a latter-day Fugitive or Agrarian. But Donald Davidson was my teacher, and he's the single best teacher that I've ever had with the possible exception of Monroe Spears. He made

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poetry and intellectual life important; all you had to do was walk into his classroom and you knew you were in the presence of some important spirit. I got interested in anthropology, astronomy, the kind of thing that Donald Davidson stood for. But the whole Vanderbilt ethos and Agrarianism and cultural pluralism were just academic subjects to me. I'm much more interested in them now than when I was in the milieu that produced them.

INTERVIEWER

What did you do when you graduated?

DICKEY

I took an M.A. in 1950 and became an instructor in technical English and report writing at what was then called Rice Institute in Houston, Texas, but almost immediately after my appointment I went off to the Korean War.

INTERVIEWER

When did you get into the advertising business?

DICKEY

A few years after the War—1956, and I stayed in it until 1962. I worked with three different agencies—first I was with McCann-Erickson, on the Coca-Cola account, where I was known not as Jungle Jim, but as Jingle Jim. I then moved to Atlanta and worked with an agency called Liller Neal and Battle, where I worked on fertilizer accounts, mainly. Also banks and Pimento products. I then took a position as Creative Director and Vice-President of an Atlanta agency called Burke Dowling Adams, where I engineered the advertising campaign dealing with the awarding of the trans-continental run by Delta to the West Coast. Now, in connection with my film work, I fly that airline all the time.

INTERVIEWER

How important was your work to you? Do you regret leaving it?

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DICKEY

No. I'm glad I left it. But if I had four or five different lives, or the proverbial nine lives, I would like to spend one of them in business. It's a fascinating and exciting way to live. It's very frustrating; it's got its hang-ups; it's a man-killing pace and it's tremendously difficult. But I love business people and I met some really terrific people whom otherwise I wouldn't have known. I wouldn't have had any relationship to them unless *that* were the relationship: making deals, working with them on their problems and selling their products. I enjoyed it. There's something about the nine-to-five existence and the five-thirty cocktails after work on Friday afternoons and talking over the problems of the week with your buddies who are working on the same problems, that's really kind of nice. I remember it with affection and with a certain amount of gratitude. Nevertheless, I don't have that many lives. I have only one, so when it was time for me to leave, I left.

INTERVIEWER

What were you writing during your business period?

DICKEY

I wrote my whole first book, *Into the Stone*, on company time. I had a typewriter and I had a bunch of ads stacked up in those famous brown envelopes with work orders on them. When I had a minute or two, I'd throw a poem into the typewriter and try to work out a line or get a transition from one stanza to the next. But the business world gives you almost no time to do anything but business. You are selling your soul to the devil all day and trying to buy it back at night. This can work out fine for a while, but after that, the tensions and the difficulties begin to mount up and you see that you are going to have to make a choice. This took place with me after about five-and-a-half or six years.

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INTERVIEWER

What made you decide to make your final commitment to writing, to say, "This is it, I am leaving."?

DICKEY

Age. I knew I couldn't have it both ways much longer, and as they say in the pro football games or basketball games on Sunday afternoons, "The clock is running." I didn't have that much time. I needed a lot more time to do my work and not *their* work. And there is also the feeling of spending your substance, your vital substance, on something that is really not that important—of giving the best of yourself, every day, to selling soda-pop. You just don't want to let yourself go that easily. You can't. Or I couldn't, anyway.

INTERVIEWER

Do you think in some ways it is a commitment to a kind of artificial moral order?

DICKEY

Well, if you work for the Coca-Cola Company, the first thing you're told is how many people's jobs and lives depend on the drink and how old and venerable and honorable the Company is, that the pension plans are good, the medical plans are good, and so on. But after all, it's only soda-pop, and you're quite sure in the end that you don't want to spend your vital substance on something that's not any more important than a soft drink. If you go with the Coca-Cola Company, Pepsi-Cola, R.C. or any of them, you enlist yourself in a war that was going on before you were born, and will go on after you die. It's a little bit—I hate to drag this in—like Vietnam. You fight limited engagements in limited areas and nobody ever wins.

INTERVIEWER

After *Into the Stone* came out, did you think that you were going to succeed as a poet?

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DICKEY

I didn't know then, and I still don't know. The Guggenheim people wrote to me and asked me if I would like to stand for a fellowship and to send in whatever I had to offer. I was in one of those Scribner three-decker-large-economy-size-packages of young poets with Paris Leary and Jon Swan, and I sent them that, and presto, lo and behold, they gave me some money—several thousand dollars. I said to Maxine, "This is our escape hatch. Let's sell the house and go and live in Italy. Why the hell not? When are we ever going to get another chance? I swore I was going to go back to Europe before I was forty. I made it at the age of thirty-nine.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of effect did Europe have on you and your writing?

DICKEY

Italy was especially good. First of all, there was what Davidson used to talk about all the time, cultural pluralism: different wines, different dishes, different paintings, different life-styles, all kinds of different things which gives such richness and variety to life. What we'll end up with if the world gets increasingly Americanized is life in a gigantic Rexall's. Of course, you can go into Rexall's and get a lot of things you need. You can also get a lot of things you don't need, but might be interested in having. There are a lot of diversified products in Rexall's. But Rexall's is Rexall's. It's not the same as going to a bull fight or going to a folk dance in Sicily or going into the Uffizi Museum in Florence.

When an American goes to Europe, he doesn't go there to get just another version of America. He wants *difference*. You see fields of tulips in Holland. You never saw anything like that in your life. You see cliffs down on the Amalfi Drive, you see people in an Italian village. The guys having a drink together: Why, by God, they fall into each other's arms—and they just *saw* each other last night; they were

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probably drunk together last night. You don't see Americans do that. Americans are pushing each other away all the time, even the men and women.

INTERVIEWER

Would you advise a young writer to go abroad for a while?

DICKEY

Yes. I believe that a broad scan of experience can be nothing but beneficial to a young writer. It may be confusing at the beginning, but the increment of his personal memory-bank can be only for the best. To cite but one example, look at Hemingway's experience of Paris. Take others: Henry James' experience of London, J.B. Priestley's sojourn in Arizona, and Stephen Crane's in Cuba. You name it.

INTERVIEWER

What other advice would you give?

DICKEY

I don't know. The talent game is a tough game. Luck plays an enormous part in it. It's not like business, though luck has a very strong place in business too. You can write one good poem by luck or hazard that's going to make people want your work. Whether or not you can produce anything good later on is not the important thing. It's that you struck it right then. It's the same with a novel—I wrote *Deliverance*. The movies bought it; it was serialized, written into a dozen languages; it's the best novel I can write, but there's also an enormous element of luck in it. I wrote the right book at the right time. People were caught up in a savage fable of decent men fighting for their lives and killing and getting away with it. My next novel could be a failure.

INTERVIEWER

How can a young poet know if his work is really worthwhile?

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DICKEY

You never know that. I don't know it; Robert Lowell doesn't know it; John Berryman didn't know it, and Shakespeare probably didn't know it. There's never any final certainty about what you do. Your opinion of your own work fluctuates wildly. Under the right circumstances you can pick up something that you've written and approve of it; you'll think it's good and that nobody could have done exactly the same thing. Under different circumstances, you'll look at exactly the same poem and say, "My Lord, isn't that *boring*." The most important thing is to be excited about what you are doing and to be working on something that you think will be the greatest thing that ever was. One of the difficulties in writing poetry is to maintain your sense of excitement and discovery about what you write. American literature is full of people who started off excited about poetry and their own contribution to it and their own relationship to poetry and have had, say, a modicum of success and have just gone on writing poetry as a kind of tic, a sort of reflex, when they've lost all their original excitement and enthusiasm for what they do. They do it because they have learned to do it, and that's what they *do*. You have to find private strategems to keep up your original enthusiasm, no matter what it takes. As you get older, that's tougher and tougher to do. You want to try to avoid, if you possibly can, the feeling of doing it simply because you *can* do it.

INTERVIEWER

What are some of these private strategems?

DICKEY

A very great deal of exercise, to keep the body moving, because when the body moves the mind is inclined to move with it. At times, a certain amount of alcohol helps. The point is to get to a certain *level* at which the creative flow can best take place. Any means to effect this end is to the good.

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INTERVIEWER

How do ideas for poems come to you?

DICKEY

Well, I can give you one example, of course there are many. But, I remember when I was in Okinawa and the war was over and we went out to one of the invasion beaches near Buckner Bay, me and my co-fliers, and we went swimming and there was an old amtrack there in ten feet of water that the Japanese had stove in—big holes in the sides of it—and I swam down and sat in the driver's seat. That image stayed with me and years later, twenty or twenty-five years later, I wrote "The Driver."

INTERVIEWER

You also write about things that an ordinary person would pass by, like the jump of a fish, or the movement of trees, or light.

DICKEY

That could almost be cited as the definition of a poet: Someone who notices and is enormously taken by things that somebody else would walk by. The major thing for a writer to do is develop some means of selecting the *best* of his memories and ideas and images and to build on them and reluctantly let the others go.

INTERVIEWER

Can you describe the genesis and working out of a poem based on an image that most people would pass by? "Dust" for example?

DICKEY

"Dust" was a collusion between or among two or three different kinds of elements. I wanted to try to utilize a stanza form with a short first line, evolving into longer lines, and at the end coming back to a short line. This is purely a technical

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problem. The second element was literary: I wanted to work with the Biblical statement, "But dust thou art, to dust returneth." The third element that was important was the sense of lying about half drunk in a California afternoon and looking up through the sunlight shining through the window and really noticing—as one will do when one is about half drunk—these strange little things in the air. They are always spiral-shaped and it seemed to me that this might have something to do with venereal disease, with the spirochete and so on. So that was the fourth element. I tried to get all of them together in one poem.

INTERVIEWER

You speak of technical elements. How do you feel about free verse?

DICKEY

I go back and forth. Sometimes I like to write in very strictly measured forms. I think there are tremendous advantages accruing to that. But then I also want to try to open out the poem and make what I have recently been calling the "balanced poem," and make gaps within the lines and write in bursts of words. You shouldn't restrict yourself . . . what Ivor Winters did, and say that it's got to be this way or it's no good at all. You should experiment. You should wander around a bit; you should risk being wrong. Actually, free verse is not a term that I myself care much for. I would call it unrhymed, irregular verse, because I remember what Mr. Eliot said, "No verse is free for the poet that wants to do a good job," and it really *isn't* free. What you are talking about is that you are not writing a rhyming or a regular verse, but more of an open, organic form.

INTERVIEWER

Does form ever control your subject matter?

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DICKEY

I used to be much interested in inventing forms, for example, the form in "The Hill Below the Lighthouse" dictated the subject matter. What I did was to work out a refrain scheme—I call it a returning rhyme—so that each stanza had an end line which was italicized. And the end stanza of the poem—the sixth or seventh, I forget which—was made up of the refrained lines themselves.

INTERVIEWER

Do you show your poems in a working stage to anyone else?

DICKEY

It depends. There are some things that I show to certain selected people if I think the words have reached the stage where their future development might prove good. But generally I keep the successive drafts of a poem to myself, because I conceive the poetic process as quite a private matter between the poet, his hand, and the blazing white island of paper which he is trying to populate or eliminate.

INTERVIEWER

How many drafts do you usually do?

DICKEY

It depends on the poem. With a longer one like "The Firebombing," I'd say certainly 150 to 175, because you are searching all the time for some kind of order—some constitution to order whatever it is you are trying to say. Then, you are also trying to render it unforgetable. We poets are shameless people. We try to give whoever reads our poems something that they simply cannot shake. And if you try to do this in a long poem you have to have some kind of executive order that makes the parts contribute to the whole so that the audience will remember both the whole and the parts that contributed to it.

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INTERVIEWER

What about a shorter poem like "Remnant Water"?

DICKEY

Oh, there are over thirty drafts of that. It's a kind of Vermeer, a still life piece; this is relatively unusual for me. Most of my things depend on violence and length. But "Remnant Water" is a short piece and so the whole revolves around the placement of each single word and not the presentation of an action, as it does in "The Firebombing." I worked on that an awful long time. It might point a new direction, I don't know. But it is necessary that one experiment; that a poet should work out different kinds of direction.

INTERVIEWER

Do you ever have the temptation to change a poem after it's published?

DICKEY

I have a paranoid thing about making absolutely sure before I let anything go out under my name that it is as good as I can do at that particular time. I might have second thoughts about it later, but I'm willing to stand on it when I turned it loose; therefore, it gets very hard for me to turn one loose.

INTERVIEWER

When you think about *Poems: 1957-67,* what poem are you least enchanted with yourself?

DICKEY

Well, I don't know. The title poem "Drowning with Others" is one that I would like to make into a much longer poem—much, much longer. It's anthologized all over the damn place—but I can see possibilities in it now that I didn't see then.

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INTERVIEWER

It's always ironic that the more successful a person gets, the more under attack he comes. I've noticed that there is an increasing amount of bitterness by a great number of people toward your work. Do you have any sort of response to their criticism?

DICKEY

Most of the time I don't even know what it is. It seems to me that a lot of it is politically oriented. For some reason or other I've had the right-wing monkey put on my back. But I'm not right-wing; I'm not left-wing; I'm not any-wing.

INTERVIEWER

After all, you did work for Eugene McCarthy at one time as a speech writer.

DICKEY

Yes, I did. He was my closest friend in Washington. That doesn't concern people. The fact that William Buckley is also a very close friend *does* concern people because that gives them an automatic put-down. I just don't worry about it. I've got too much work to do. It seems to be an invariable rule that people who don't have a strong creative drive, but find themselves in the creative competitive market, are eventually and inevitably going to put other writers down by means of politics.

INTERVIEWER

Some of your detractors have mentioned the fact that they felt that you should use your influence, your place in the world, for the "betterment of man."

DICKEY

If I knew what it was, I might do that. But I don't know. There's this tendency in American life to assume that because someone is good or maybe just notorious or publicized in one

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realm that he's a universal authority on everything. So, Frank Sinatra or John Wayne can tell you how to vote. What competence do *they* have in politics? Or that a poet can tell you about ecology or something of that sort. A poet is only a professional sensibility. His opinion in politics is no better than anyone else's ninety-nine percent of the time. But they're always being interviewed and always being asked their political opinion: what should we do with the military, what should we do with the economy, with government spending, *etc.*? Poets don't know anything about that. If they did, they wouldn't be poets. This is not to say that they are precluded from knowing anything about it at *all*; it is to say, however, that just because they are poets their opinions should not be paid any more attention to than anybody else's. It does not give them any privilege or any insight or any clairvoyance as to the political and economic and military future of America.

INTERVIEWER

You don't feel, then, that since a poet has a highly-developed sensitivity about our universe and about our place in the world and our society, he should make public pronouncements about the direction our society is taking?

DICKEY

I think in that way lies madness. No; all he's got is his own sensibility and his own opinions as a private citizen. But he has no privilege. Insight, yes. Maybe a poet could come along who could solve all our problems, but I haven't seen him yet. The history of poets pronouncing on public issues is notoriously dismal.

INTERVIEWER

I remember you quoted Auden talking about poetry: "for poetry makes nothing happen." Do you believe that?

DICKEY

I think that if it does make anything happen, it's deep in

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the individual's sensibilities; it's not in the public arena. As John Peale Bishop says, when the poet, or the critic, mounts the soap-box, the garbage remains in the streets.

INTERVIEWER

Did your job as Poetry Consultant to the Library of Congress involve you in the political world? One thinks of Archibald MacLeish trying to get Pound out of prison.

DICKEY

Well, Archie was the *Librarian* of Congress, and his name is engraved in gold just inside the entranceway of the Library. The Consultancy is quite a different thing. I did try to get several of the incarcerated Russian poets out of prison without success. My position was not such as that which Archie occupied. My name is not engraved in gold letters, and I would not have had the capacity to occupy the position which Archie had, nor would I have accepted it if offered. My position was that of being the only equivalent that the United States has of Poet Laureate. Frost was in the chair, Robert Lowell was in the chair, and Robert Penn Warren was in the chair. The job is as the incumbent conceives it: he can do as much or as little with it as he likes. He can lecture, he can initiate programs that the Library will implement, he can arrange for lectures in the Coolidge auditorium, he can travel for the State Department, or he can do nothing at all except accept the position as a sinecure. I chose to be a working Consultant. I set up an arrangement with the local ETV station to film the readings that I proposed, so that the Library would have the nucleus of a filmed archive of writers, novelists and poets that would eventually be the equivalent of the spoken archives that the Library is famous for. Video-tape made this possible. Universities and students may now go to the Library of Congress to see and hear, for example, John Updike reading from his works. Also John Cheever, William Stafford, Josephine Miles, and many another.

It is also part of the tradition of the Consultancy that the

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Consultant take at least one extended trip. Frost, for example, went to Russia. I went to New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and Alaska. I made the job hard, and, now that it is over, I am glad that I did.

INTERVIEWER

You got into what you call your *one* political foray when Yevtushenko was here, in this country. Why?

DICKEY

Well, he's a close friend. I like him very much, but I profoundly disapprove of the kind of thing he does. He uses poetry as a pretext for making Bohemian speeches. He's a great deal better poet than Allen Ginsberg, but he does the same *sort* of thing. I don't think poetry is well served by that. Poetry *can* speak on topical things eloquently. Look at Yeats on the riots of 1916, for example. But we should not be led into the corner of assuming that poetry is no good which does not speak on news items. If a man wants to write about the circle that's made in the water when a fish jumps, he should be able to write about that and should not be charged off as irrelevant because he's not writing about the Vietnam riots. You should have the whole gamut: political action, the jump of the fish, or the space program. You should have anything you want.

INTERVIEWER

It seems Allen Ginsberg is the diametrical opposite of you.

DICKEY

I certainly hope so. I think Ginsberg has done more harm to the craft that I honor and live by than anybody else by reducing it to a kind of mean that enables the most dubious practitioners to claim they are poets because they think, "If the kind of thing Ginsberg does is poetry, I can do *that*." They damn themselves to a life of inconsequentiality when they could have been doing something more useful. They

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could have been garbage collectors, or grocery store managers. Poetry is, as Yeats has said, "a high and lonely profession." It is very easy, too easy, to pick up on the latest thing in the newspapers and write a poem. That's all Ginsberg does. He just doesn't have any talent. I'll do a Ginsbergian poem, or a Robert Bly poem for you right now.

INTERVIEWER

Do you consider them in the same school?

DICKEY

Well, not exactly the same, but they take off from the same . . . launching pad. Their poem goes:

*It is the hour when the Americans in Viet Nam are examining their hands.*
*The dead are lying below the tangles of jungle brush.*
*All over Minnesota snow is beginning to fall over the missile silos.*

INTERVIEWER

A Southern writer said: "James Dickey first came to my attention as a reviewer and I thought he was one of the roughest around." You've been pretty rough on some of your contemporaries. For what reason?

DICKEY

Well, I'm not all that rough. I have a very naive feeling as a reviewer. I don't believe that a reviewer or a critic can really criticize well unless he can praise well. I always liked that about Randall Jarrell. He praised well. James Agee praises well. You've got to be able to like the right things to be enabled to dislike the wrong things. People misconstrue John Simon. He *does* praise well. He doesn't find much to praise, but he praises well. John Simon hates so much so vehemently because he likes so little so strongly.

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INTERVIEWER

Let's talk about someone that you do like strongly. What attracts you so much to William Stafford?

DICKEY

It's because he has the ability to say amazing things without seeming to raise his voice. He's kind of *murmuring*. I've never encountered a poet like that. He's not doing a lot of vast tearing, rhetorical stuff like Lowell does, or a lot of kinky, tricky, self-derogation like John Berryman. He's talking like an American mid-western farmer who just has this capacity to say startling, quiet stuff.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that Stafford is making a more significant contribution to American letters than Lowell is?

DICKEY

Yes, I do. I think Stafford will mean more to people over a longer period. Maybe not to the makers of textbooks or anthologies, but he's a people's poet of the finest kind; he's instantly understandable and he gives you an enormous amount to think about without hollering at you, or without beating you down. Roethke was like that. Stafford, in a completely different way, has that same quality. He doesn't have the crazy apocalyptic kind of a feel that Roethke has, but he's got an easy-going, quiet, authoritative, human, imaginative voice.

INTERVIEWER

Did you know Roethke?

DICKEY

Yes, I did indeed. I knew him quite well during the last two years of his life. He was a strange, terrifying and terrified man. He seemed to have no confidence in himself. He was constantly afraid of being fired from the University of Wash-

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ington because of his drunkenness and his periodic insanity. He feared becoming destitute, though he had a fine house on John Street overlooking the sea, a devoted wife, and friends who would have gone to the gallows for him. None of this seemed to do him any good. He read, it seemed, every scrap of paper on his work that appeared in print, and conceived endless literary emnities toward this, that and the other literary critic or rival poet. Despite the fact that he was a little hard to live with, he was on the whole a lovable man, and it is still difficult for me to believe that he is gone from us.

INTERVIEWER

You had an article in *The Atlantic*, "The Greatest American Poet: Theodore Roethke." Why is he the greatest?

DICKEY

I don't see anyone else that has the kind of deep, gut vitality that Roethke's got. Whitman was a great poet, but he's no competition for Roethke. Lowell is a fine poet. He's a narrow, tragic, personal, confessional kind of writer. He's very good. But you can be interested in his hang-ups, his family, for just so long. In order to read Lowell and to like Lowell or Anne Sexton or any of the people that follow after Lowell, what is presupposed is that their life and their situation is going to be eternally fascinating to you. And it isn't. I *am* interested in Roethke's relationship to the ocean, because that gets me *into* it. I can participate. I can't enter Lowell's family. Of course, Lowell is an enormously powerful writer. The measure of his ability is that he can *make* you interested in his family; whereas, Sylvia Plath, writing poems like "Daddy," is ridiculously bad; it's embarrassing. Lowell is a big writer and he *compels* you to be interested. People like Sylvia Plath or Anne Sexton just embarrass you.

INTERVIEWER

How do you respond to the emergence of Sylvia Plath as a celebrated figure?

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DICKEY

She's not very good. She's just someone who killed herself out of literary desperation—out of desperation to be literarily notable. Someone ought to write an article called "The Suicide Certification," which assumes that if you're a poet and you kill yourself, then you have *got* to be good. No way.

INTERVIEWER

One time you called it "suicide chic."

DICKEY

Well, of course, if you're taking your own life, that's a horrible situation. Al Alvarez seems to think, in his recent book on suicide, that she was just doing it as a gesture and she hoped it wouldn't come off. So she killed herself by mistake. She's the Judy Garland of American poetry. If you want to kill yourself, you don't make an *attempt*; you do it. You make sure that the thing comes off. Suicide *attempts*, and then writing *poems* about your suicide attempts, is just pure bullshit! Sylvia Plath is of a certain talent, a very modest talent. Anne Sexton is better than she is and I don't care much for her, either.

INTERVIEWER

What is your opinion of the famous Southern women writers—Eudora Welty, Carson McCullers, Katherine Anne Porter, and Flannery O'Connor?

DICKEY

The women of the South have brought into American literature a unique mixture of domesticity and grotesquery. There have been two routes open to the Southern woman writer. She could research a historic subject, such as Elizabeth Madox Roberts did in *The Great Meadow*, which deals with the opening up of Kentucky, couple this with domestic images from her own life, and write her fiction out of these two considerations, or she could deal with eccentric village

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types, such as Carson McCullers and Eudora Welty frequently do and Flannery O'Connor does to an extreme. The Southern women writers of the two generations which produced our great ones were singularly immobile, but then so was Emily Brontë. They had little breadth of experience, but much penetration into a specific and still *milieu*. They are remarkable writers. But their scope is limited to the local and domestic, with, in some cases, an admixture of the grotesque. I like it all. This is the way my women see things, and it is an interesting way that sheds light.

INTERVIEWER

Is there something about the South that is peculiarly advantageous for the writing of poetry and fiction?

DICKEY

Yes, I think there is. Due to their past, their history, their rural background, Southerners are lonely people. They very seldom have anyone to talk to. The result of this has been that when a Southerner encounters another human being he talks his head off. Add to this the very strong folklore and the legendary quality of local stories, anecdotes, and jokes, and you have the basis for Southern poetry and also for Southern fiction. Out of this situation, plus a certain superficial literariness (as in the case of Faulkner) came a great literature. But there are certain obvious defects. One of these is the eternal sameness of Southern fiction, which almost always deals with a family either in a single generation or covering several generations. One cannot reasonably assume that a wide reading public is going to be interested in yet another novel dealing with the Lutrell family in Ellijay, Georgia, with its criminally-inclined son and its seduceable daughter. With poetry it is quite different. A mystical element enters. It enters into the landscape, the rivers, and the animals. Our greatest poetry has been written out of Southern landscape, and not out of Southern people. This is to the good, I think.

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INTERVIEWER

Has the poetry of Robert Frost, particularly the country poems, been of interest or impact?

DICKEY

I don't care much for Robert Frost and have never been able to understand his reputation. He says a good thing now and then but with a strange way of averting his eyes while saying it which may be profound and may be poppycock. If it were thought that anything I wrote was influenced by Robert Frost, I would take that particular work of mine, shred it, and flush it down the toilet, hoping not to clog the pipes.

INTERVIEWER

Did you know him?

DICKEY

Yes, I knew him slightly, and spent a couple of afternoons with him when I was teaching at the University of Florida in 1955, and a more sententious, holding-forth old bore who expected every hero-worshipping adenoidal little twerp of a student-poet to hang on his every word, I never saw.

INTERVIEWER

One of the things I think that you do enjoy is an audience. Can that be the death of a poet, if he enjoys performing?

DICKEY

It sure killed off poor Dylan Thomas. He didn't write even *one* poem in the last six years of his life. Everybody adored him, paid him a lot of money; why should he write another book of *poems*, and maybe give the critics a shot at him that would lower his reading fee? Everybody *loved* him; he was screwing all the coeds in America, drinking all the whiskey, and he'd get up there and read his poems, and then he'd go on and read them somewhere else. He got a lot of dough for it. I mean, what incentive for him to write *was* there? To

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survive, a poet has to find some way of maintaining his original enthusiasm for *poetry*, not for the by-products of poetry, not for the fringe benefits of poetry, but for IT.

INTERVIEWER

One time you were answering some irate poet and you said: "It's ironic to me that so many poets go about defending themselves in the wrong way; the real test lies in the poem."

DICKEY

Listen, a poet's pages are filled up with what he's done, that he can live on and trade on; but he has *got* to find some way to love that white empty page, those words he hasn't said yet.

INTERVIEWER

I think some people thought that you came out with *Deliverance* as a kind of afterthought, but I know from talking to you earlier, that you had thought about *Deliverance* a long time. Why did you decide to finally go ahead and do it?

DICKEY

Well, I did think about it a long time. I started it about ten years ago and finished it about two years ago. It is misleading to leave it at that, because it would cause people to believe that I did nothing but work on *Deliverance* all that time—year after year. I wrote seven or eight other books during that time. *Deliverance* was really not high on the priority list at all. As Thomas Lovell Beddoes said of his own involvement with his lifelong work, never finished, called *Death's Jest Book*, "I just gave it another kick whenever I got around to it." But by damn, when it began to look like *Deliverance* was really capable of being finished, then I started leaning on it and pushing, and working on it until it finally *did* get finished. Nobody was more surprised than I

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was, because this novel was just something lying around in a drawer. I liked the story and I got to where I was interested in the characters, and so on. I didn't know anything about writing novels—I still don't know much about it.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of process did you go through in writing the novel—shifting from poems to a fictional work?

DICKEY

The main problem for me, as I recall, was finding out ways to do without the poetic line, because I had really relied heavily on the line, and the way the human eye moves across the page, what happens when you read a line of verse and the way it goes into the next line. I had to learn a whole new set of conventions, to work with the sentence and the paragraph, which I didn't know very much about.

*Deliverance* was originally written in a very heavily charged prose, somewhat reminiscent of James Agee. But it was too juicy. It detracted from the narrative thrust, which is the main thing that the story has going for it. So I spent two or three drafts taking that quality out. I wanted a kind of unobtrusively remarkable observation that wouldn't call attention to itself. That's why I made the narrator an art director. He's a guy who *would* see things like this; a writer would perform all kinds of cakewalks to be brilliant stylistically, which would have interfered with the narrative drive of the story.

INTERVIEWER

You have so many interesting set pieces in there. One that struck me was that section beginning "there is always something wrong with people in the country"—which you ended "and I saw that the only way out was by water from the country of the nine-fingered people." Did you ever feel like putting something like that into a poem?

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DICKEY

No, it was the other way around, because some of the same events which are depicted in *Deliverance* have been in poems —such as the boat going by the effluent pipe where the chicken heads and the feathers are. I wrote it into poetry first. Then I pulled it out of the poem and used it in the novel.

INTERVIEWER

Did you feel as if you were reducing it, changing it to prose?

DICKEY

It really wasn't a question of changing it over from one thing to the other. It was a question of reconceiving it in terms of another medium. The poems that I wrote were as a kind of three-part sequence, as I remember, called "On the Coosawattee." The same events and circumstances and physical situation over twenty years ago in North Georgia were what I was trying to reconceive in terms of the novel.

INTERVIEWER

What do you feel *Deliverance* is going to say later on?

DICKEY

I don't know. It has been variously reviewed. I don't really read very many reviews of anything I write. If somebody comes up to me and says, "Jim, there's a fabulous review in *The Atlantic* and you must read it; he's crazy about the book," then I'll read it. If the guy says it's a horrible review and that I'm the anti-Christ himself, then I don't read it, because I don't want to go around filled with resentment against some stranger. That bleeds off your energies; you take them out in useless hatred. I need the energy for other things. I've known writers who are absolutely destroyed by adverse opinion, and I think this is a lot of shit. You shouldn't allow that to happen to yourself, and if you do, then it's *your* fault. My course is set; I know what I'm going to do. As

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Stephen Dedalus says, in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, "I'm ready to make a lifelong mistake." I believe in making a lifelong mistake, but I don't believe in being guided by people who write about me. Why, there's not anything that could ever be said about a person either good or bad that hasn't been said about me. But it doesn't matter. I'm going to write my way and if that doesn't agree with people's sensibilities or even their digestions, it doesn't make any difference to me. If it's a lifelong mistake, it won't be the first one that's been made.

INTERVIEWER

What sort of contribution do you, yourself, feel that *Deliverance* will make?

DICKEY

I'll tell you what I really tried to do in *Deliverance*. My story is simple: There are bad people, there are monsters among us. *Deliverance* is really a novel about how decent men kill, and the fact that they get away with it raises a lot of questions about staying within the law—whether decent people have the right to go outside the law when they're encountering human monsters. I wrote *Deliverance* as a story where under the conditions of extreme violence people find out things about themselves that they would have no other means of knowing. The late John Berryman, who was a dear friend of mine, said that it bothered him more than anything else that a man could live in this culture all his life without knowing whether he's a coward or not. I think it's necessary to know.

INTERVIEWER

You don't feel, then, as some critics have said, that this particular work can be viewed as an exercise in violence?

DICKEY

No. At least not in the sense that Peckinpah's "Straw

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Dogs'' is an exercise in violence. What I don't like about Sam's work is that it has that obvious element of contrivance in it. *Deliverance* is something that could happen. You run up against bad men who would just as soon shoot you as look at you. In fact, some of them would rather. So what do you do? This is a story about what you *do*.

INTERVIEWER

Do you feel that it is in the tradition of the grand male fraternity that dominates Hemingway's fiction?

DICKEY

Hemingway's people are bull fighters and boxers. Their *business* is violence. My men are decent guys. Lewis is a survival freak who is a nut on special disciplines, such as archery, canoeing and so on. Suburban people, especially these fellows, are supposed to get out there and look at nature a little bit . . . have fun before it all disappears. Lewis might be a little obsessive about it. But the other guys—Ed Gentry, the narrator, for example—is just a decent guy with the job of providing for his family who happens to be fascinated with Lewis. Ed Gentry is not a bull fighter, a boxer, a tournament archer, or a racing canoeist. He's a guy who has a tangential relationship with these things that his obsessed buddy insists on talking about and doing. Drew is another decent guy, and is untroubled. He's America's own man. He's what the culture develops and the culture hopes for . . . a decent family man, he tends to his business, he does his job, and he has a couple of mild hobbies, like playing the guitar. Bobby, the other fellow, is a fat, lecherous country-club guy who never should have been up in the woods to begin with. We get those men together and we have them beset by the blind fury of two disgusting human beings; and we see what the decent guys so.

INTERVIEWER

Is this kind of a warning to us?

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DICKEY

I don't know whether it is or not.

INTERVIEWER

Some people felt like it might have been a kind of social commentary, thinly disguised.

DICKEY

I don't know. My interest was in just simply writing the story, and letting the symbolism fall where it may. Hemingway was right about that. You don't try to build in, self-consciously, a bunch of preconceived symbols. If we make a real river, and real canoes, and real men, and real monsters, and real arrows, and real shotguns, and real woods, and real rapids and white water, then all the other stuff will take care of itself.

INTERVIEWER

What of your writing now? What's it like being a post-*Deliverance* writer?

DICKEY

It's not so bad. My preoccupation is with poetry, and everything else is a spin-off from that—novels, literary criticism, screen plays, whatever. If I lose poetry, which is the center of my creative wheel, I lose everything. I don't propose to let that happen. I want to write another book of poems, and then maybe have a big collection in a few years. Then I want to turn away from everything I've ever done in poetry and strike out in a completely new direction, if I can find what it is.

INTERVIEWER

Do you have any ideas?

DICKEY

The main thing in poetry is the discovery of an idiom and

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the exploitation of it over an area of thought for a long period of time. It is discovering an idiom such as Christopher Marlowe did—he really discovered blank verse—that's important. He didn't do it all himself. He found it too early. But Shakespeare *did* do it. I want to get at a kind of new way of using the English language which would not be mannered in such a way, as say, John Berryman is mannered, and would not be so lax as say Randall Jarrell is lax. I don't mean to make them into two possible poles, but we could use them as a starting place. There are some possibilities of the English language which have never even been hinted at. I don't know whether I can get at them or not. It may be a little like the blind man in the blacked-out room looking for the black cat that ain't there. That's very much the feeling I have, and yet I believe I can touch him every now and then. One of these days, I'm going to grab him.

INTERVIEWER

Who do you go back to and want to read again?

DICKEY

My writing really couldn't be assessed by what my tastes are, because I love to read and I'll read anything. I love to read good-bad poets, like Roy Campbell and Vachel Lindsey. If I want to turn my critical apparatus on and write an article, then I can turn my critical apparatus on and write an article. Nothing is easier. But I also like the thrill of a wide reading net, and a lot of the bad poets appeal to me just as much as the good ones do. This may be unfortunate.

INTERVIEWER

If you had to have a frank conversation with Berryman or Vachel Lindsey, what would you say to them?

DICKEY

I'll tell you what I would talk about with Berryman, if I could get him back. Of course his body lies shattered on the

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ice of the mid-winter Mississippi River. But Berryman was a man of intense friendships. His friendships meant more to him than his love affairs—more than anything else. His experience was very narrow. Sitting around drinking with Delmore Schwartz, or with Randall, or Lowell was about as intense as John ever got. There was a poem of his in his posthumous book that was based on a phone call that I made to him when I was drunk and he was drunk, and it was a very moving thing to me to open up Berryman's posthumous book and to come upon a poem titled "Damn You, Jim D., You Woke Me Up." His friendships were all-important to him, and *that's* what I would talk to John Berryman about.

INTERVIEWER

How about Lindsey?

DICKEY

It would have to do with the relation of the poet to the public by means of the public reading, communicating with hundreds of strangers. Lindsey was the first great proponent and probably the greatest practitioner of this form of human communication. The next great one was Dylan Thomas, who could read, in his rich South-Welsh voice, the telephone book and make it sound like Scripture. People are very deeply moved by the sound of the human voice that says—that seems to say—deep rhythmical things. In my own time a whole generation of poets has been sustained by public appearances and by the deep need of people to be moved by true, imaginative words.

INTERVIEWER

You've known a great many poets personally. Do you find some common characteristic—in their madness, their vision, their discipline?

DICKEY

I would have to put the answer in the form of a paradox.

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Most of them are what the world would call weak men and women. They are wayward, licentious, heavy drinkers, irresponsible, unable to maintain a household properly and subject to unpredictable vagaries of conduct. But, turning the coin to its other side, the best of them are incredibly strong people who will drive head-first through a steel wall to get their work done. This is the type of person I admire most. I admire the type as I do, I suspect, because I am one of them.

INTERVIEWER

Do you keep in touch with fellow poets?

DICKEY

I am almost completely out of touch with them. They often write to me, but because of my heavy schedule I almost never have the time to answer. My correspondence deals with current and future projects which I am embarked upon. I would like nothing better than to engage in lengthy literary correspondence about time, life and its meaning, love, death, sex, and art, with poets such as Robert Lowell or James Wright, but I do not have the time. I suspect that they don't either, but I like to think that they would welcome such a correspondence, could it be done. But it can't. My letters should never be collected, for most of them concern business, which is a very dull subject, for me no less than for anyone else who might be so underpriviledged as to read them.

INTERVIEWER

We've talked a good deal about American poets, but English poets are always on the scene; some critics contend that the best contemporary English poet is Phillip Larkin.

DICKEY

Oh, my Lord. Phillip Larkin is a small kind of *vers de société* writer. He's one of these Englishmen of the welfare state who writes self-effacing poems about how much he

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hates his record collection. That's not what we need. We need something that will affirm the basic possibility. This self-effacing stuff is so goddamned easy, it's tiresome.

INTERVIEWER

Is this the same poetic attitude you were discussing when in reviewing James Merrill, you said, "his characters are always coming across each other in museums"?

DICKEY

That's right. But I don't have anything against Phillip Larkin or Ted Hughes—who's different. He's a guy who has a kind of ersatz violence that's equally easy to do. Hughes writes the kind of stuff I throw away. Larkin's all right; he's pleasant and kind of low-key—but that's all. No, no, the only really good guy over there and the only one who has any originality or interest for me is W.S. Graham, the Scottish poet. He's the real stuff.

INTERVIEWER

Why do you like Graham?

DICKEY

He has an original language. He can say amazing things. Larkin can't say anything amazing. Ted Hughes gives you the effect of a weight-lifter who can't get the weight up.

INTERVIEWER

If there is a direction now in America, what do you think it is?

DICKEY

It could be toward some new and strange simplicity. Stafford has made a run at it.

INTERVIEWER

Is the country more a part of it than the city?

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DICKEY

You have to keep to your sources as a writer. There are good writers who have the urban consciousness. John Hollander is one of them. He's a very fine writer. Auden is another one. He's always a little bit embarrassed by landscapes, or mountains or rivers, or any of the big natural forms.

INTERVIEWER

Except Iceland.

DICKEY

Yes, except Iceland. I don't know what he *did* in Iceland, or what he saw up there, but he was always a little bit embarrassed by nature, and he'd rather write about the city and the glass and chromium kind of culture we have. He didn't like it, but he was *used* to it and he knew it. I think the really good poets of now, and the ones who are going to be good, are going to be poets of dying nature. They're going to be like Lewis in *Deliverance*: people who are paranoid about getting out and seeing a little bit of this world before it disappears. I think the great poet, who is going to come, is going to be the poet who can see in a single grass blade—a single surviving grass blade—heaven and earth, or the lost paradise. There are not going to be that many more grass blades. The animals are going, the trees are going, the flowers are going, everything is going. So the poet who is going to be the great poet of the future is going to be that poet who can tell us what that last grass blade, popping up through the cement, means—*really*.

INTERVIEWER

In *This Is My Best*, in which you are collected, you said that you considered "The May Day Sermon" to be your best poem. Do you still?

DICKEY

Yes I do. Certainly. It's the best I can do—my big effort.

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INTERVIEWER

Why does it work for you?

DICKEY

I think because it's got that kind of poetical wildness that I seek for. "Falling" has some of it also.

INTERVIEWER

What do you mean by *wildness*?

DICKEY

Something that no one could imagine if he hadn't felt it. It's really a kind of madness I feel when I'm writing. It's not an induced madness from alcohol or other things of that nature. I don't know what it is, but it lets me achieve the kind of thing I did in "Falling," but especially in "The May Day Sermon."

INTERVIEWER

You've talked about age being the great enemy, and here you are fifty years old.

DICKEY

Well, for me it can go two ways. One of them is that I'm at the end, right now, and I've already said my thing and there's no more for me to do. The other side of the coin is that I'm at the beginning, that I have finally arrived at the beginning and it's all to do yet, and what I've done up to this time is nothing at all compared to what might be possible. I think it's necessary for a writer to have this sense of possibility and also to have the sense of being finished, because you don't know which it is.

INTERVIEWER

What are you working on now?

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DICKEY

A poem called "The Zodiac." It's about twenty-five pages long, and it's far better than "The May Day Sermon" . . . if I can just last. It is the best I can do . . . . But boy, I'll tell you, the thing that is exciting to me is that I have spent fifty years crawling up the hill of Parnassus on my hands and knees, and now I want to see if I can fly.

—FRANKLIN ASHLEY

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*Maxine Chernoff*

# TOOTHACHE

I never had a toothache, but the desire to have one crossed my mind constantly. Once I went to a doctor, hoping for a positive diagnosis, but he attributed the pain to a small insect bite on the left tonsil. From that day I resolved to abandon the hope of ever feeling the longed for, quick stab of pain or a steady musical throbbing. My teeth were a fortress against any invaders, the health spa of an otherwise decrepit body. Sometimes I'd see people rubbing their fingers over a spot on their cheek, hot as a sidewalk in summer. Envious, I'd fall off chairs, steps, and bicycles, trying to land on my mouth. I took up meditation and biofeedback to focus some pain in my teeth. Like children, bored with the gifts of a visiting aunt, they remained uninvolved. Finally, quite by chance, I found a way to bring myself relief. Through a new medical procedure the dentist removed one healthy tooth and implanted a large decaying molar in its place. It was worth the trouble. Now, when I pass a candystore, I buy the chewiest caramel. And when I crunch on an ice cube, the dull pain is long and complex as a medieval tapestry.

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# HATS AROUND THE WORLD

The Mexican hat dance is performed around a sombrero, a broad-brimmed hat of felt or straw. Mexicans keep their feet spotlessly clean, so that they may perform this colorful ritual at the drop of a hat.

The English bowler hat was worn by Charlie Chaplin. He used it as a prop in his slapstick comedy routines. In so doing, he abused a most genteel hat.

The Chinese cap is a fitted gong, originally worn by the most insufferable Chinese opium king. He had the annoying habit of interrupting opium dreams by tolling the time on his hat.

The French beret was invented in Paris in 1828, during an epidemic of ringworm. Likewise, the hot air balloon was invented during a strike of Air France in 1934. The French are a very pragmatic race.

The sailor's cap, now made of canvas, is a flat cap with a narrow white brim, originally woven from gull's wings.

The chef's hat is a deep bowl in which greens, preferably romaine, crumbled cheese, croutons, and a raw egg are tossed vigorously to make the caesar salad.

The Busby is the British version of the Russian Cossack hat, that wild, furry, barbarous hat, captured and domesticated by a leather strap under the chin.

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John Stetson (1830-1906), was greatly annoyed by the attrition rate of his hats in the West. People often heard him muttering, "Why didn't I invent the Derringer?" Finally he moved to Boston, learned to crochet, and opened a ladies' bonnet shop.

The crown is a hat most abused. Wrought of fine metal, adorned with diamonds, emeralds, and rubies, it has graced many a greasy head.

The halo speaks for itself.

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*Gary Fincke*

# LEG

For hours I will sit staring at a portion of myself. A leg perhaps. Mine is thick and heavily muscled, a bit fat in the upper thigh. Most people would consider it powerful, capable of winning some kind of contest. The short, curly black hairs cover it in a regular pattern. There is no detectable flaw in the perfect taper of the calf or in the smooth-working joint.

If I stare long enough, I always discover a pimple on the thigh where my shorts rub. It just begins a white head within its red circle, marking the vague line where the tan stops and the paleness begins. Above that line there are two more red blotches, one containing a circle of dead skin, the remainder of a small boil.

The leg pales as it lies limply, completely relaxed. It grows pulpy to the touch. It stiffens, becoming incredibly rigid. Blackens. A smell, a withering away.

I may have the details wrong. What mistakes I have made do not matter. What I am sure of is the general process. The leg will soon be bone. The flesh will not be remembered. I am the only one who has memorized it.

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# Y

If I stretch, slowly, my arms in an incredible Y, I become a metaphor—

I have taught tennis serves to wealthy women, repeating the importance of the Y. They practiced before me, attempting to toss the ball within reach of their swerving rackets, lifting their breasts inside carefully fitted uniforms, and I sang a song of encouragement, standing near the most attractive. None of them ever became proficient. They played on Saturdays, whenever the weather was nice, splitting into polite and evenly matched foursomes when their time was called by a suntanned attendant.

I propose traveling around the circuit of women's clubs, eating covered-dish dinners, growing fat on scalloped potatoes and home made bread. If I extend Y into an eternal grasping for great heights I can offer it as a lesson to the same women who serve poorly at one of their monthly meetings.

I will name my book *Y* and offer it to my audience at a phony markdown. It will be full of intricate diagrams of Y.

With my profits I will settle into an ultra-modern apartment complete with compulsory abstracts. I will commission an expressionistic Y. After I live there for a month I will forego paying rent, laughing at my eviction.

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*Nancy Condee*

## "IN THE LATE AFTERNOON . . ."

In the late afternoon, above the town of Llanes, on the rock wall of the promenade, old men sit facing the ocean and read soft core pornography.

Sometimes nuns too visit this promenade and walk along it from one end to the other. And then the old men, taken by surprise, fling their magazines out into the ocean, where the wind catches them and carries them back landward. The old men wave their arms, trying to strike at the magazines. The magazines scatter. The old men chase after the pictures, pinning them down with their canes and beating them back to the sea. As the nuns draw nearer, the old men become completely violent.

How interesting it is to walk along the promenade above Llanes at this time of day, with the old men fending off pictures of nude women, and the nuns approaching closer and closer, and the old grey Atlantic undulating beneath them.

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# CHARLES DARWIN'S GREAT GRANDSON'S LAST MEAL AT CHEZ PIERRE

Charles Darwin's great grandson
dined on frogs' legs,
found them rotten,
spit them back up onto the plate,
coughed up his lunch from six hours ago,
yesterday's breakfast of ham and eggs,
a dinner of duck from three nights back,
a lamb and a calf five months old,
meals, meals, meals, meals,
every species of meat and fowl
from the lizard chicken to the horse with toes
strained from his stomach in reverse evolution.

Charles Darwin's great grandson
died of a dinosaur bone in his throat.
The cockroaches drank another toast
and danced a quadrille on his face.

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# THE EXISTENTIALISTS' WEDDING

Having lived together for so long that they could no longer stand the sight of one another, the couple decided that this alone was reason enough to legalize their relationship, and so they mailed off the wedding invitations.

Grudge was to be the theme of their wedding. They limited the guest list to two former lovers apiece, his mother, her father, the landlady with the green teeth who was to serve as maid of honor, and a hospital attendant who had deflowered the groom some years before and was now quite enthusiastic about the prospect of serving as best man. All those against whom the couple held only mild grudges were hurt, of course, but what can you do?—you can't invite everyone.

To ensure that there would be no difficulty with the weather, the wedding was scheduled to take place during the next thunderstorm. When it finally came, and the whole town was scurrying around, closing up car windows, taking in the wash, and chasing lawn chairs around the yard, the groom rolled out of bed, pulled his bowtie out of the top drawer, and tossed the bride her blue garter.

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## "TODAY IN THE CLUB CAR . . ."

Today in the club car of the
Four o'clock to Washington I met Satan.
He was trying to push ahead of me to order a ham
Sandwich and I was getting a tuna fish sandwich.

"D. Incarnate, call me Satan," he explained, stepping in
front of me.
He told me he worked as a candy salesman from Australia.
I took it
With a grain of salt: he had long, thin hands the color of
eggshells.
They opened and shut like day lilies as he spoke.

We sat and talked for some time
In a group of four facing seats.
We put our feet up and told
Everybody the seats were taken.

We went back to the counter before the train pulled into
Washington,
Me for coffee, him for chocolate cake. He tried to butt
In front of me again. "Oh, get behind me, for Christ's
sake," I told
Him and when I turned around

all that was left of him was his hands
which flopped around the floor gasping for breath
like two beautiful and dying fish.

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*Günter Kunert*

# THE CENTRAL STATION

On a sunny morning a somebody discovers an official letter in his dwelling: it is lying on the breakfast table next to the cup. It is uncertain how it got there. Scarcely opened, it pounces on the reader with a demand:

You are, the official print on the grey, ragged paper commands, to appear on November 5 of the current year at eight o'clock AM in the men's room of the central station for the purpose of your execution. You have been assigned stall 18. Failure to obey this order can result in such punishment as is provided for in the administrative decree. Light clothing is recommended to insure a smooth procedure. A little later, the person afflicted with this order despondently appears among his friends. He refuses food and drink, but is urgently desirous of advice, receiving, however, only somber and significant nods. Absent are a decisive bit of advice, an offer of help. Probably they breathe a secret sigh of relief when the door closes again behind the still living but doomed one and ask themselves whether it wasn't too much even to have opened the door for him. Was it worth it, who knows what you can do for somebody of whom you can expect so little in the future? He himself now goes to a lawyer where he receives the suggestion that he file a petition, but in any event adhere to the date (Nov. 5) in order to avoid reprisals. The men's room and stall 18 sound quite tolerable and reasonable. Nothing is ever as bad as it sounds. Execution? Probably a typographical error. Actually they mean organization. Why not? The lawyer finds it well within the realm of possibly that they require of a brand new. client that he organize himself. Wait and see. And have confidence! You must have confidence! Confidence is the most important thing.

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At home he who has been summoned to the men's room tosses and turns among the thoroughly dampened bedclothes. Filled with a burning envy, he listens to the buzzing of a fly. It's alive! It has no worries! What does it know about the central station?! One doesn't know anything about it oneself . . . In the middle of the night he rings his neighbor's doorbell. An eye gapes out at him through the peephole, briefly, inexpressively, until the ringer capitulates and releases his finger from the button.

Punctually at eight o'clock in the morning he enters the central station on Nov. 5, shivering in a short-sleeved sport shirt and linen pants, the lightest clothing he owns. Here and there an unoccupied porter yawns. The floor is being swept and constantly wetted with some liquid.

His lonely steps echo through the mirroring emptiness of the men's room. He finds stall 18 at once. He shoves a coin into the lock of the swinging door and he steps in. A wild certainty that absolutely nothing will happen flares up in him. Absolutely nothing! He will be organized, that's all! It will all be over right away and he can go home. Confidence! A euphoric mood rises in his throat; with a smile he locks the door and sits down.

A quarter-hour later two toilet attendants enter, open stall 18 with a passkey, and pull out the lightly clad corpse, in order to place it into the red-tiled depths of the central station about which everyone only knew that no train had ever arrived, much less departed from it, even though some smoke, like that of locomotives, often hung over its roof.

*Translated by Duncan Smith*

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*David Young*

## THE POEM AGAINST THE HORIZON

In a dim room above the freightyards, next to an old brass bed, an angel is taking off his wings. He winces a little as he eases the straps that run down into his chest: the beat of the wings is the beat of the heart.

Out of harness, the heart rolls over now. Panting like a wrestler. Such love, such soaring! Spokane and back. So good to come down, home to this room with the stained lace curtains and the sound of switch engines. So good to remove the wings, the love, the yoke the blood must wear as it paces, oxlike, the circle of its day . . . .

He sleeps on his side in the overalls he was too tired to take off. Outside the window, rain runs and drips from the eaves. Overhead, the wind and the black sky belong to someone else.

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# The Falcon

## Pati Hill

Mr. Bean and Mr. Muller were in the Coffee Cup sharing a grinder when the notion came to Mr. Bean to paint a lion. He got up at once without excusing himself and went to the hardware store where he bought a can of yellow paint, a can of orange paint, a can of green paint, a can of black paint, a bottle of turpentine and two brushes, one large and one small. He took them to the shed behind his house and cut himself a piece of masonite twenty-four inches by twenty-four inches square.

He saw this lion as seated dead center in the manner of a family portrait, the mouth closed, the expression mild, and in the background four lambs following each on the heels of the other, as alike as patterns on wall paper.

It took Mr. Bean six days to finish his picture, not because the subject presented any particular problems but on account of the time it required for the different layers of paint to dry.

When it was finished he set it on a shelf and studied it for a few days, then laid it face down beneath a pile of sandpaper and forgot it.

A few days later it came to him to paint a picture of his neighbor's house.

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Although he had lived next to Mr. Adams for forty odd years they had never spoken. The lady who lived with Mr. Adams was not his wife and the house was surrounded by a wall made of smooth stones resembling balls of chewing gum.

Mr. Bean used the same technique in painting his neighbor's house that he had used in painting the lion, except for the wall which he made by gluing on real pebbles and in the sky above he wrote: "Thou shalt not covet."

When his neighbor's house was dry he laid it above the lion but this time he did not forget it. As he walked the streets of Stonington he looked for other subjects such as the cannons in Cannon Square and the monument to the American Revolutionary Troops in front of the library, but he did no further work until the Portuguese Festival when he painted two fishing boats and the grandstand decorated with crossed American and Portuguese flags.

These works he showed to his wife who said, "Well, I was wondering what was keeping you out there in the shed. You could put the boats over the mantlepiece, but I don't like the Portagee Fathers. It's cranksided," by which she meant she did not like the Portuguese or believe them a fit subject for a work of art.

In his heart Mr. Bean agreed. However, he was not master of his inspiration and did not wish to discuss the matter.

Between July and December Mr. Bean covered eight pieces of masonite and two pieces of common carton with subjects ranging from Mrs. Bean's hat to the Hudson Tunnel which he did from memory.

This last he was particularly satisfied with due to his realistic rendering of smoke from the automobile exhausts in steel wool and he asked permission to display it in the Coffee Cup window.

"How much do you want for it?" the proprietress asked.

"I don't mean to sell it," said Mr. Bean. "I'd just like to put it out where people can enjoy it. It took me a deal of time to paint."

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"Well, it sure does beat all," said the waitress, and together they set about cleaning the glass that it might be seen to the best advantage.

On a cold night in February it came to Mr. Bean to paint a falcon. He got out of bed and made his way into the tool house in the dark. He knew this falcon must be finished in one sitting and he was puzzled to know how to go about it, but as he crossed the driveway his attention was caught by an oily rag which was folded and twisted in such a manner that it resembled the creature he had in his head to perfection, so seizing it he nailed it viciously to a board. In black letters he wrote "Pride goeth before fall," and this work he hung above the door of the shed.

The pounding wakened Mrs. Bean and she was filled as she often was filled with irritation against her spouse and thought as she often did how she might have married Miller's boy and be living in an unmortgaged house on the hill, but when Mr. Bean came in his expression was so agitated she decided she would not mention it.

"Get in bed you old fool," she said, "It's nearly light!

The night before the Beans were married, Mr. Bean had had a premonition. He had foreseen that their wedding cake would not be delivered on time and he had taken his bicycle and ridden full speed to Whalen's Bakery.

The shop was closed except for Mr. Whalen's mother who was deaf so he wrote on a piece of paper, "Tell Al don't forget cake 3 P.M."

The cake arrived at four-thirty after Mr. Bean and his bride had been toasted in apple jack and cranberry juice and left on their honeymoon.

Mr. Bean foolishly disclosed this premonition to Mrs. Bean on their second anniversary and as a result she held him forever responsible for the missing refreshment at the same time declaring him unreasonable to have thought he could change Fate.

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The month following that in which Mr. Bean painted his falcon his health began to fail and the doctor prescribed rest and walks by the sea.

Mr. Bean was not accustomed to lying down by daylight or walking without a definite end in view but he soon accustomed himself to his new existence and took pleasure in talking to people who had not crossed his previous path.

One of these was Professor Sisson, a man near his own age, who collected seaweed in gunny sacks to fertilize his garden and make custards.

The two men, so unlike in temperament and experience, often sat together on the rocks beneath the pier rubbing their hands together or trudging across the sand.

One afternoon as they neared the lifeguard's post the public telephone located beneath it began to ring.

The two men looked at each other in surprise, then the professor picked up the receiver, but could not make out the words that were said at the other end.

The next day Mr. Bean read in the local paper that the Professor had died of a heart attack.

Mr. Bean was not surprised. A man who ate seaweed and answered public telephones in such unlikely surroundings could not be in sound health.

When, some weeks later, he heard the same telephone ringing he walked on without so much as glancing in its direction. Nevertheless he took a chill which rapidly went into pneumonia.

On the fifth day (which was also his birthday), Mrs. Bean sent for Father Manueli and together they awaited the end. Mr. Bean recovered, however, and subsequently painted a mural for the bank and another for the laundromat. Peaceful works which caused favorable comment even from his wife.

It should be noted in closing that Mrs. Bean was a gaunt woman with cold feet and she had straight hair that she pulled into a knot behind her head and she had never been otherwise, but she suited Mr. Bean very well.

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# William Anthony

# Raid on a Whorehouse

INTERVIEWER: How did you arrive at this style of drawing?

ANTHONY: A number of years ago when I was on the West Coast I taught drawing at a commercial art school. My students wanted to learn to draw accurately, that is to draw a hand that looked like a hand. To help them I did exaggerations of the mistakes which beginners make: heads too large, torsos like sand bags, skinny necks, legs resembling carrots, elbows and knees that looked as though they'd suffered from sort of tourniquet treatment. I put all these mistakes together to form a classically idiotic figure. Then this satiric how-not-to took on an insane life of its own in *my* work.

INTERVIEWER: Did you do *Raid on a Whorehouse* at that time?

ANTHONY: No. At first my drawings were satires of well known works of art, everything from Rubens' *Judgment of Paris* to Warhol's *Soup Can*. Later I began to feel that the style with its kid-like simplemindedness seemed to call for kid subject matter. I started drawing stuff an eleven-year-old would do, World War II battle scenes and cowboys and indians. *Raid on a Whorehouse* is part of this body of work. When I was a kid I was very interested in whorehouses, except for a long time I wasn't sure they really existed. I thought they were something made up by the twelve-year-olds as a joke on us nine-year-olds. Whorehouses sounded too good to be true.

INTERVIEWER: How long did it take you to do the *Raid* and how big is the original?

ANTHONY: It's approximately two feet by four feet and it took me three months. It's my major opus.

INTERVIEWER: Can you talk about the details of the drawing?

ANTHONY: Those folks coming down the stairs are after Masaccio's Adam and Eve. Just to the left of them is a picture of one of my major drawings, *Victory at Sea*. Miniaturizing all those planes and ships was harder than doing them in the size I ordinarily work in. Here it covers only about five square inches and took three days to do; most of the time I spent sharpening my pencil.

INTERVIEWER: Why did you draw the characters from the whorehouse dancing together?

ANTHONY: The inspiration for these drawings came from Edward Hicks' painting, *Peaceable Kingdom*. I wanted to do the johns and whores and cops from the whorehouse coming to a peaceful reconciliation like the lion and the lamb in Hicks' work. At first it seemed a good idea simply to do a drawing of the various characters from the whorehouse posed together in a satire of *Peaceable Kingdom*. Later I decided it would be more *simpatico* to have the whorehouse characters dancing together.

—M.M.

*Photographs on pages 106-111 by Malcolm Varon, N.Y.C.*

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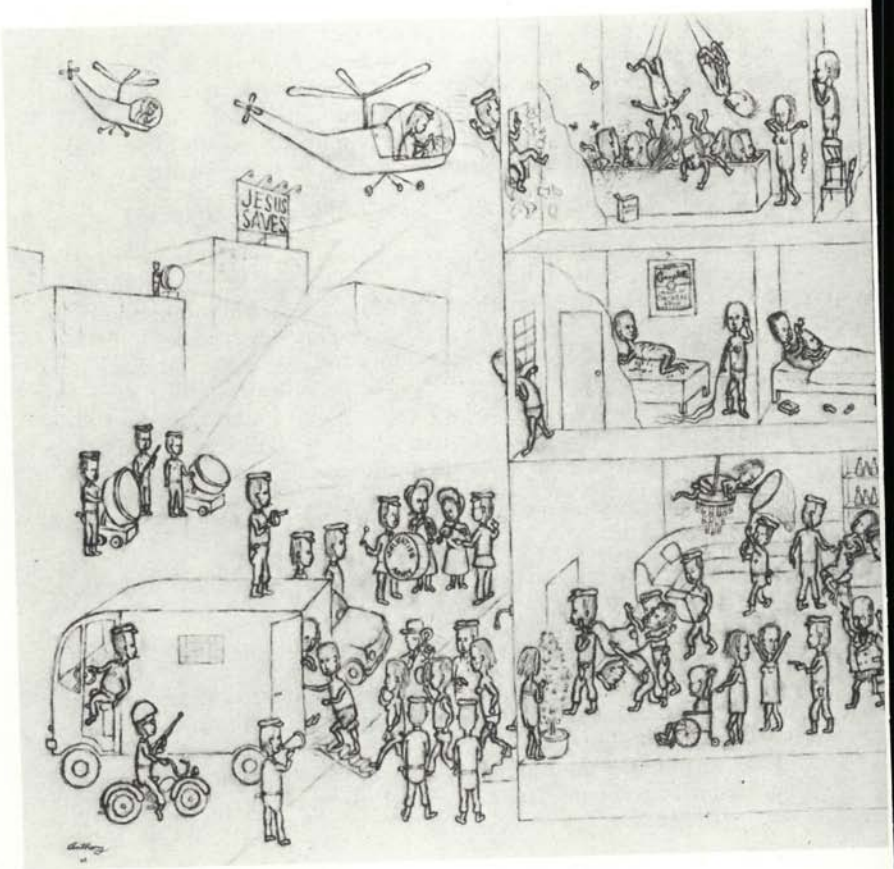


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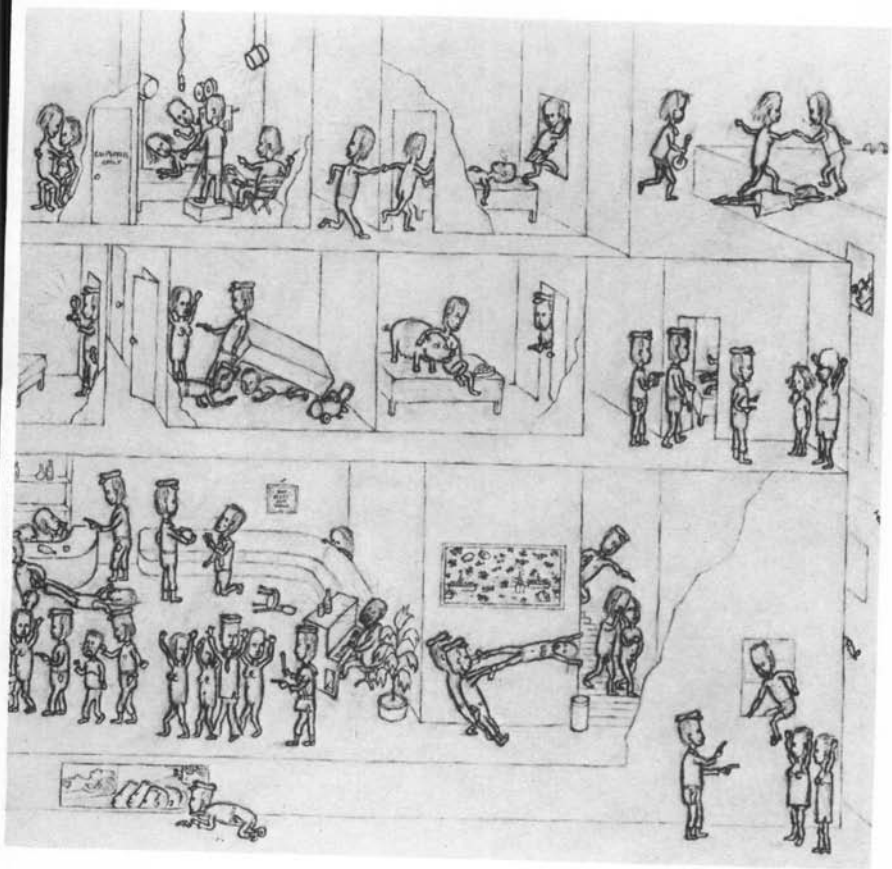

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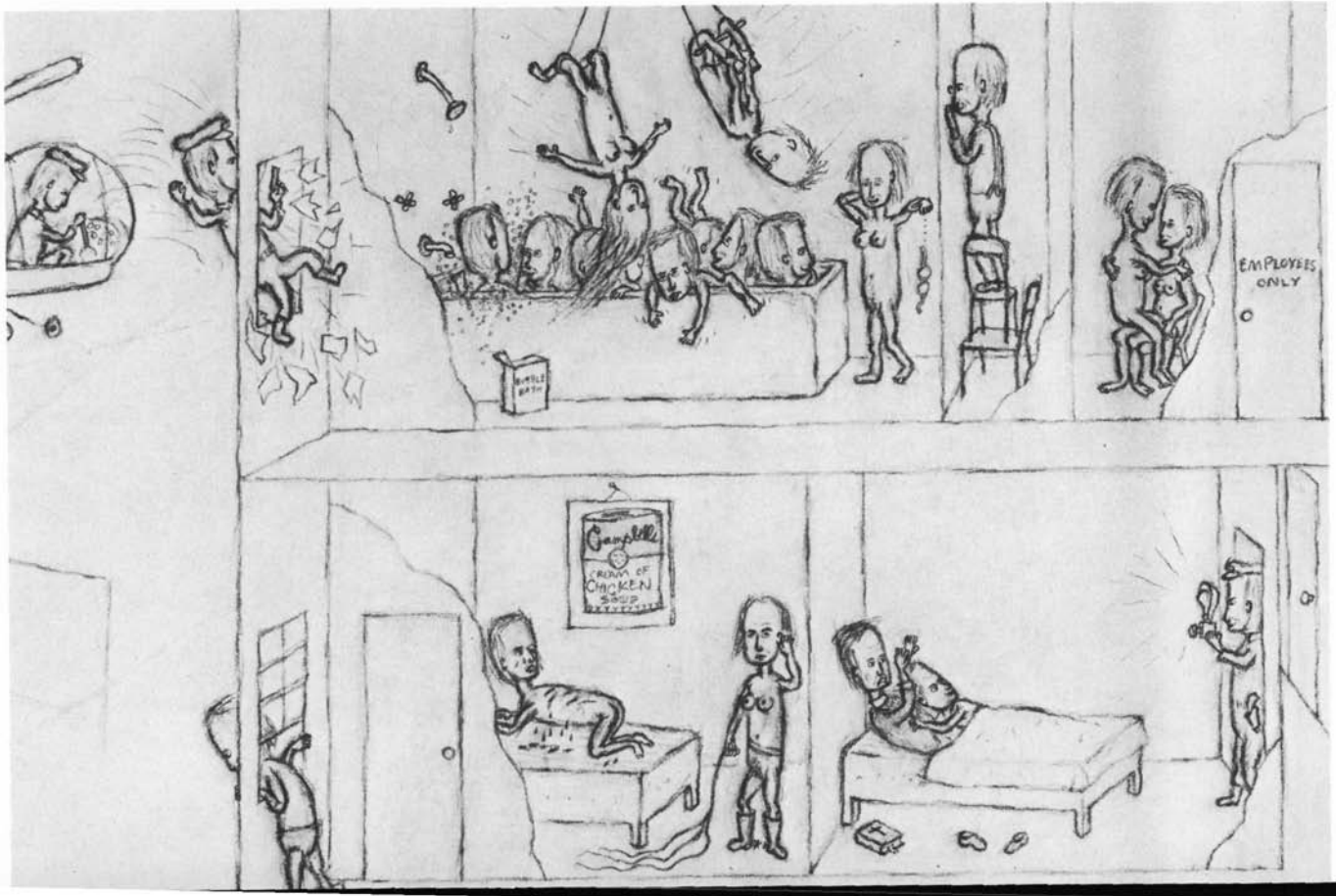


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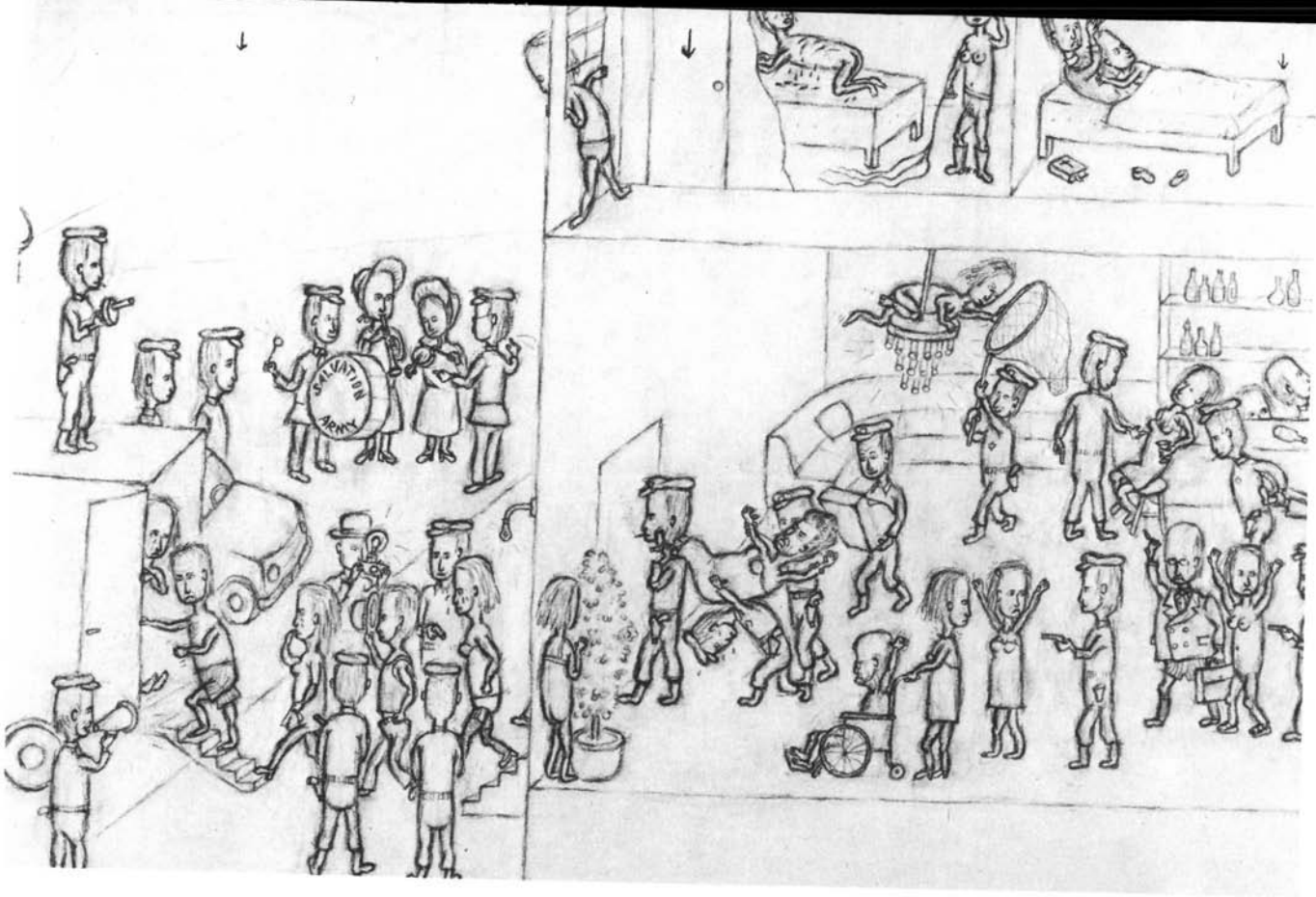


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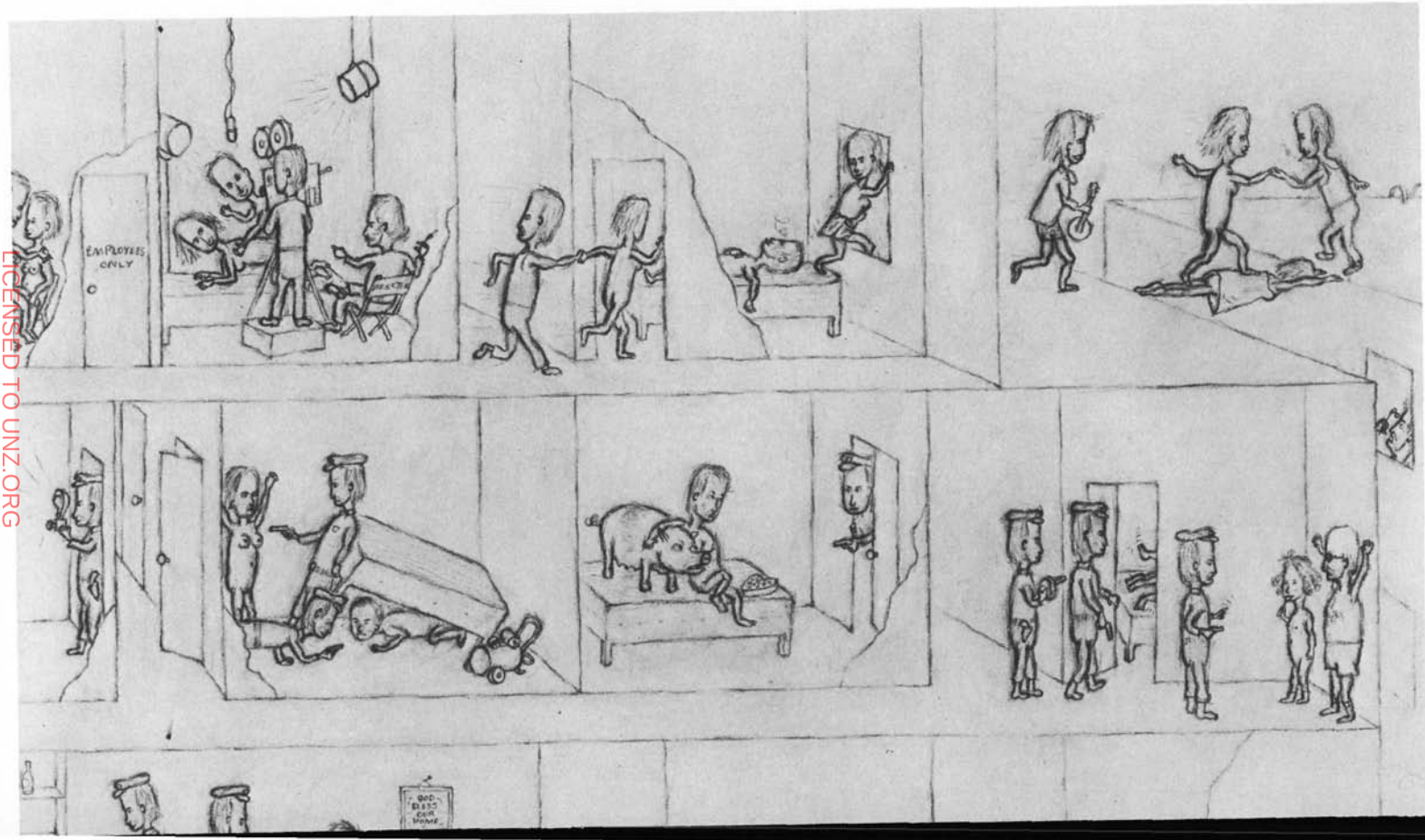


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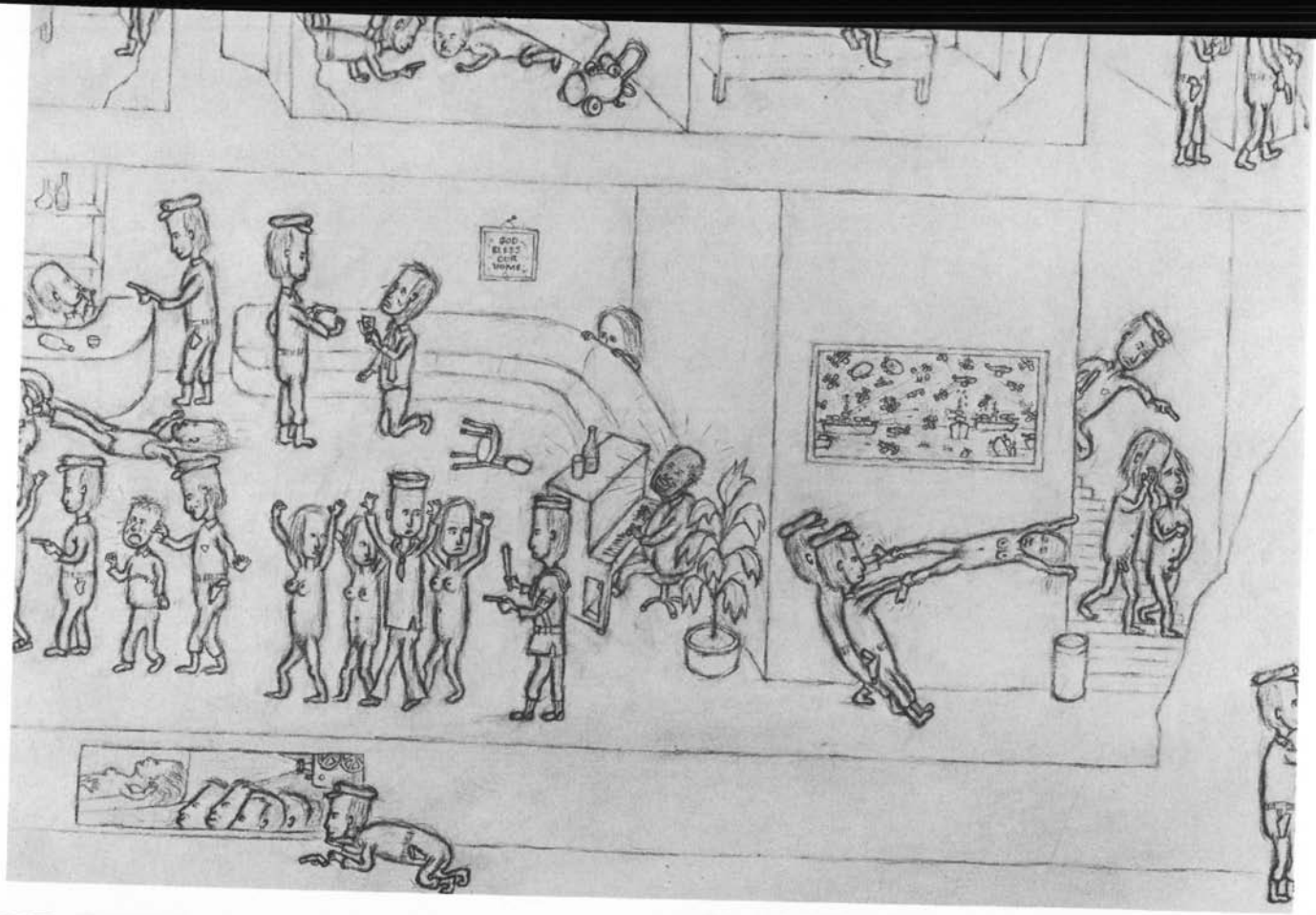


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## Assorted Characters from the Whorehouse Dance Together

Disporters Not for Reporters

Salvation Gyration

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Sade Squad

Hooky Nooky

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Pig Jig

Divinity Sans Virginity

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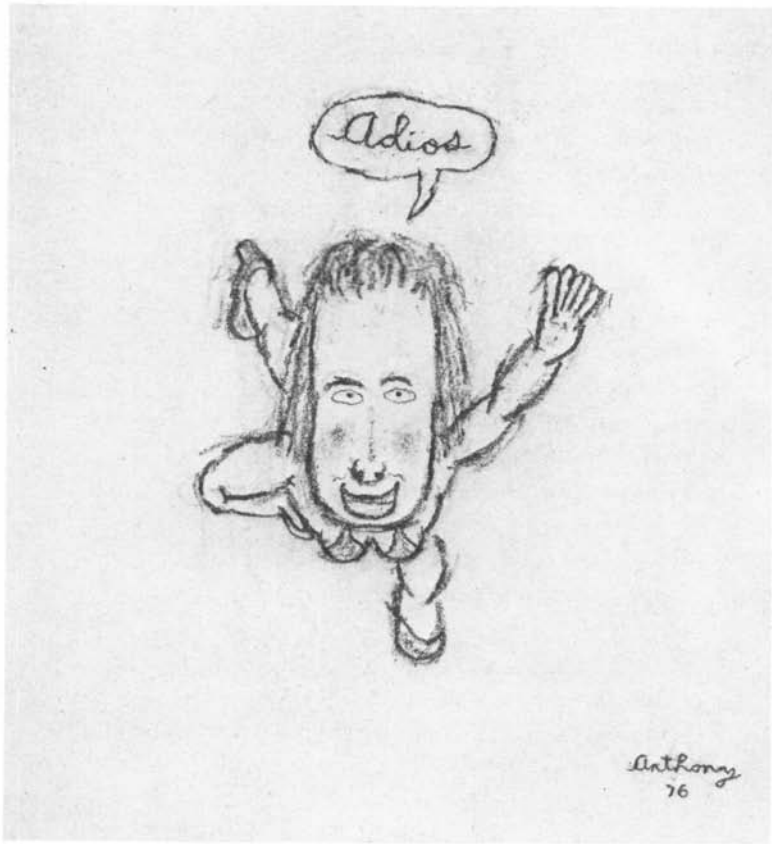


*Collection of Norma Neuman*

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*Jim Gustafson*

## HOMAGE

Homage to those days
when you're up early and hysterical before noon.
When your deepest darkest doubts
and loftiest expectations blend together
like Liquid Plumber and Turkish coffee
and leave you utterly befuddled.
Days when you feel mangled by the sheer uselessness
of your vast terrestial knowledge,
and can only hope that rescue is on its way,
perhaps trapped in an errant gypsy cab
somewhere between the pale green frontier
and your suite at the Grand Hotel.
Within the predominance of clutter
you might think of yourself as a victim of form.
Or feel like a stronghold of fleshtone
in a world of brick red.
This is called "rational fear" and there
is nothing you can do about it.
Waiting for someone to turn up below your window
and sing "come on baby let's go downtown"
sensing in some peculiar way
there is no journey you want to take by yourself.
Homage to those days when the energy is so great
you wonder if you can trust yourself
in the same room, but know the focus
is so bad that if you ran you couldn't possibly find the door.

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*Jeffrey Wells-Powers*

## PICTURE PERFECT

I think I saw you once
In another kid's Easter basket.
Maybe it wasn't you or wait
Maybe it wasn't an Easter basket.
Maybe it was just this side of a garage door
Or looking up from beneath steps in the London subways.
Maybe it wasn't your face I saw
But the flares of curves from beneath your dress.
No, it wasn't curves
It was essences.
Or maybe you didn't have a dress. Pants maybe.
And I think it was your hair I saw,
But not in the subways. I think it was in front
Of a dinner plate. If that's true,
It must have been your face. Maybe it was
From behind a percussion set-up
Or a plate glass door, but if that's true,
I should have seen everything.
No, I think I did see you
In another kid's Easter basket,
But it wasn't Easter. That was what was so strange.
That must be why I remember.

## A FUTURE GAME

I am pleased to announce
Some of the things
That won't concern me
For the next couple of years:

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*Siv Cedering Fox*

## TALKING TO ANN ON THE TELEPHONE

*for Anne Darr*

And I say my poems are getting too loose
flopping like clothes on a line
bright colored bodies
looking for their souls
shirts billowing humpbacked
obese
slacks, inside-out, showing
the white gull-wings that wait
inside pockets

Every morning
I put fresh wet clothes on the line
that unravels from the small wheel
by my window
to cross a treeless backyard
to the wall of some other wall
And before dew and evening
I roll them back.
Wash everything in sleep, again.
Wake. Pray against rain.
Wring the soul out
open the window
give the clothes to the wind

And if, some evening, I pull back the line
and see that 18 socks are gone
and the underpants with the lavender flowers,
I can construct the creature of the soul
walking softly, somewhere, in 18 warm feet
wondering what to do with lavender flowers
and how many heads you need
to wear a three-holed hat

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*Marjorie Hawksworth*

## WOODEN-LEGS

The man on stilts
lights his cigar
from the glow
of a street-lamp.
Walking home from work,
too tired to jump down,
he peers into
all the upstairs windows
of every lovers' lane
and counts
naked bodies by moonlight.
Home at last,
he swings onto his roof
and sleeps on the shingles.

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*Cathy Arden*

## THE MISSIONARY

It's not
because I am a land
lover
that I live
under
the muddy
thatched roof of
this jungle hut

that I've never
learned how to turn
elephant ivory into something
more useful than
teeth around my neck
their hair into sewing
needles

All there is to wrap
my body in around here
are damp palm
leaves that layer the floor
and then I have to
go out and peel
more leaves off the trees
(unless I want to do
away with the floor
completely)

What I mean is
I can't be too proud
of a chest full
of elephant sewing
needles
when there is
nothing to be sewn

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I received word
once
no not by way of
a scroll
in a corked bottle

by sound
waves through the lightning
bolt I had turned into a radio
antenna

that a missionary
would pass through
the bush
build a steeple
over my head
with chimes
siphon off the water
in this area
make the ground
hard build
pinewood pews
on the mountain

take away the palm
give me clothes
invite me to dinner

but that
was a while ago
around monsoon season
which is probably
what stopped him

that
or the quicksand
surrounding this village

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## PLEA TO A POTENTIAL LOVER

Don't take me home, at least not yet;
Let's have another drink, and sit
and talk—I want to be your woman,
but there isn't any rush.
Let's take our time,
and think it out.

Lovers surprised by love, like us,
make one mistake: they make too much
of it, want the world
to love them, and believe.
The world believes
in nothing it can't touch,

touches what it cannot have,
and loves to death. We've been in love,
we've passed the rites of marriage
and we know the knife.
You and I
have nothing left to prove.

Let's keep the secret. On my life
I know a woman's lovelier than a wife.
I want to be your woman
and without recourse.
Darling, I love you.
Let's get a divorce.

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*Anne S. Perlman*

## FAMILY REUNION

All right. Let's hear it
for this fine figure of a
trout on every plate.
In front of me on white china
his fry-dark belly
dark as my own bones,
closet bones
that will never see light.

Now then,
cut off his head.
The quick guillotine
at the quieting table.
Slit the thin skin,
lay back two neat
sections of flesh,
the vertebrae intact.
There'll be no thrust and parry
of his bones darting in my throat.

Flip the body
to repeat on his underside.
The spine lifts out easily.
White how white
its bones are.
Do I have any part
of me left,
whole and shiny?
These secret fish bones
have no cracks.

Against the brittle talk
breaking up the table,
I lay that trout's
perfectly branching core
by its blind head
at the very edge of my plate.

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*Adrianne Marcus*

## IN THE DELIVERY ROOM

Father, all of the fears
I've learned are one word: silence.
How is emptiness measured? What can
I give you in return? Not the child
whose face you refused. Animals refuse
to bear their young when the time's
not right. They reabsorb the fetuses,
become unpregnant. I'm almost forty.
I've carried this one inside me
like an animal, trying to reabsorb
what wasn't mine.

I know what unwanted means.
Swollen with rage, I've come
full term, and they wheel me
into the delivery room, fat
as September, overripe. I
can't go back. Leg by leg
fastened, distended, I'm
all impersonal. Bear down.

The caged tissue suddenly gives,
the head crowns. Once more.
Shove. The mouth releases
and the intimate air comes
raw and screaming, full
of blood. Father.
Your sentence is absence.
I have delivered
myself.

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# A POSTCARD FROM CALIFORNIA

He's standing alongside a watermelon
ten feet high. His arms can't begin
to contain it. He's grown old propping

it up, but has someone come in once
a month to trim off his white beard.
There's a red velvet curtain behind

him; it sets off the unholy green
melon, his nondescript clothes, so
that he is only the smallest measure

of what's center stage: that erogenous
melon. "That's how we grow them in
California," the postcard proclaims.

We grow old, trying to display such
riches, trying to create scenery
that will hold it in perspective.

Big mountains. Impossible trees.
Everything here bigger
than the person.

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*Tom Luhrmann*

## THE APPROACH OF WINTER

More than leaves, dust and wind
envelop the football game in the meadow.
It is an enormous, ill-defined ball of Artic tumbleweed
that has rolled into Central Park out of Northern Canada;
in a moment it will go through the apartments on Fifth
Avenue
as if they were not there.

And in its midst
the players see the heart
of the coming winter.
Not a snowflake, a sliver of ice,
or laughter that cannot be distinguished from a cough,
but the absence of a heart
and in its place
a kind of energy.

We know the energy of April is silver rain
falling around the newlyweds' house
and it is a silver train
running through the backyard of their house.
But the energy of winter
is difficult to describe,
to find analogies.

It is the end of the day in Philadelphia.
From the window of his office at the University
a professor of anthropology
watches workmen moving wheelbarrows
before a red, declining sun.
He says to himself "winter"
and knows that he is wrong.

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# Ward #3

## Ira Sadoff

I suppose you would have to call our apartment cozy. Two and a half rooms in a basement on Fourth Street, where the coats and the roaches mingle freely in the bathtub, the sink works often as not and the people wash their feet in the toilet. Cozy but not sanitary. Our few friends affectionately call the place Ward #3, but it is officially known as apartment 3. For the moment I am considered the responsible person in the apartment because I am the only one with a job. The fact that this job is night managing the Red Barn, supervising the greaseburgers and the soybean milkshakes, does not seem to disturb anyone here, although my constant inability to hold a job for more than a month is a little more of an apartment concern.

That the four of us ever got together is a mystery to me, that we are still living in the same apartment is more of a miracle or a catastrophe, depending on the day of the week. There is Andy Meltzer, formerly one of the youngest violinists in the New York Philharmonic, later a violinist in a Holly-

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wood movie orchestra, and currently one of the foremost fiddlers in the New York subway system; Josh Wyman, a tall, bleached-blonde gigolo, who spends his working hours in the lobbies of Atlantic City hotels; and Janice Kasoff, whose only claim to fame is that since she has been living with three males she has become a very straight-forward lesbian.

I first met Janice when she was serving drinks at the Limelight Cafe, and one night we got to talking after I had lost my job at the Eighth Street Bookstore and she offered to let me stay with her for a while. She was very sympathetic, almost motherly, and somehow we got involved with each other. Sleeping on the same bed had something to do with it. I moved in permanently, and then, when I was no longer interesting to her (for reasons I am still not certain), instead of asking me to move out, she asked others to move in, to help her pay the rent. She could have made more responsible choices, but not, apparently given the company she keeps. So here we all are, sleeping on one king-size mattress, very little going on between us, doing occasional battle with insomnia and cold feet. Every once in a while we hear one big sigh, almost coming out of the mattress, a sigh of relief that we've made it through another day.

What distinguished the day I stopped sleeping with Janice from other days is hard to say. I remember getting home from work (this time as a runner in the Forty-second Street library) and finding Andy (although I didn't find out his name was Andy until later) in bed with Janice, not doing anything but talking. Although the bed is the apartment's only real piece of furniture, this did not stop me from being a little taken back, even shocked. I fought every bourgeois impulse in my body to keep myself from saying, "What the hell is going on here?" and instead just sat on the mattress and joined in the conversation, finding Andy pleasant enough if not overwhelmingly interesting. Janice and I had never discussed the assumptions of our relationship because there simply weren't any, but when I saw Andy on the bed I began to feel we

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needed some. I asked her to come out into the hall for a moment, and then asked her what was going on. "Is he an old friend of yours or something?"

"No, I just met him today. On the IRT. He was playing a lovely Bach *partita*."

"Is he going to stay for dinner?"

"No, he's going to live with us."

Somehow I had expected it all along. "Is there something I've done?" I'm ready to let myself in for anything. "Was I becoming too possessive?"

"No, you were becoming too boring."

"I see. You want me to go?"

"Not as long as you're willing to split the rent. What attracted me to Andy, aside from his beautiful playing, was the seventeen dollars plus I saw lying in his violin case. I got fired from my modeling job today. The instructor said they were going to do still-lifes for the rest of the term."

I could think of nothing else to say. I remember being scared to death that first night the three of us slept in bed, with plenty of room but not able to dare touch Janice, and the second night wanting to try anyway but discovering Andy fondling Janice's breasts while she stared at the ceiling, and the third night when nothing happened I began to forget about our intimacy, as though I were sleeping in some kind of decompression chamber. And while I feared I could not sleep in the same bed with them while they were making love, it turned out, when it did happen once, I could, and I was fascinated and horrified at the same time, like a man allowed to witness his own funeral. And I found out that everybody does it primarily the same way, that neither Andy nor I had anything special to offer in the way of lovemaking. It never happened again, so I assume it must not have been all that terrific.

Of course it occurred to me that I should get out, that our living conditions were far from ideal, that I had never been able to take all that stress, but what did not occur to me was

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where I could get out *to;* my occupational status was even more precarious than Janice's, and in reality there wasn't a person in New York I knew well enough to move in with, even for a short time. So instead I called a meeting of the three of us one night when we all managed to be around at dinner time, and I suggested that there was a way we could eliminate some of the chaos around the apartment. It would not be a bad idea, I said, since we were all living together, if we started sharing some responsibilities.

"What responsibilities?" Janice sneered.

"I can see you're basically an anarchist," I said. "We could plan meals, divide expenses more efficiently, clean the place up, arrange to be away if someone wanted to bring someone over, and so on."

"I can see you're basically an idiot," she said. "There's nothing wrong with the way we do things around here, at least as far as I'm concerned."

"I don't give a shit," Andy said.

"We don't have enough money to pay last month's rent, for one thing," I said. "If we could get some of our priorities straight, I don't see why we couldn't manage."

Janice became furious and turned to Andy. "How much have you been pocketing out of your take? Honestly, you make me so mad, Andy, I take you off the streets and you cheat me out of the goddamn rent money."

"Janice, what are you so angry about?" I said. "Sometimes I can't believe how rotten you can be to people."

"I guess that's just because I'm a castrating bitch," she said and walked out, slamming the door melodramatically behind her.

"Well, there goes your communal living," Andy said. "Why don't you leave her alone? We'll manage somehow."

"How much did you spend on that Zuckerman concert last week, Andy?"

"Forget it, Mister Military. You're not making enough money to balance my books."

For a couple of days none of us spoke to one another. Janice

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slept on the floor, restless and without a blanket, and I tried to think of something we could do to pay the rent. But then Janice arrived with Josh, who had tried to hustle her in front of the Saint Marks Cinema. "I usually get twenty-five for the act itself," he said as he walked in the door, "and forty for the entire night. But I can see you're pressed, so I'd take twenty and run." And then, after looking at us, he added, "Unless there are going to be spectators. Then the price goes up accordingly."

"Take it easy, pretty boy, I'd never sleep with a guy who bleaches his hair. But I have a proposition to make. How would you like a permanent base of operations? Where were you planning to sleep tonight?"

"I was planning to make a hit for the night. In fact I'm still planning to."

"Wouldn't it make sense for you to have a real place to stay? Twenty-five dollars a month for everything? You could make that with one half-hour grunt."

"You've really hit bottom, Janice," Andy said, shaking his head.

"No thanks," Josh said. "You just made me lose a good hour of street time."

But three days later Josh came back with a handful of books and a large collection of cosmetics. "Sometimes the city is real slow," he said. "And I need a place to relax. I work too hard." For two weeks Andy refused to speak to him.

If I had counted on history I would have realized way in advance that I was not destined to be a junior executive at Red Barn. What I did not think about when I took the job was the basic impossibility of motivating a bunch of pimply teen-agers to work when their parents had forced them to get a job and they hated every moment of cooking, cleaning and serving in their waking life. One night an assistant Mr. Red Barn himself came in to inspect the premises while I was providing the employees with my usual deluge of obscenities; what I did not know was that hamburger kings have princi-

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ples, that I couldn't expect to serve sterile malteds and little fish fries and have a filthy mind at the same time. And I knew after I'd said, "Get those miceburgers rolling," I had buried myself beyond apology.

What bothers me, I suppose, is given that I can't hold a job like this, what job could I hold? And what would happen to me if I just stopped looking? That explains my willingness to trek to the hinterlands of Queens for the Red Barn; and if I walked through the old sites and abandoned exhibitions of the old World's Fair, it was because I secretly hoped I would get mugged. What I really wanted to see was the desperate face of the junkie opening up my wallet and finding it absolutely empty. It would be more satisfying than looking in the mirror.

When I got home to tell everyone I'd been fired, Janice gave me a look that let me know I was absolutely, hopelessly pathetic, and she turned away from me indignantly. It was a look I had seen on her face only once before, and both times it made me shiver. The other time we had gotten free tickets to, of all things, a hockey game, and surprisingly enough to both of us, we went. And even more surprising, we screamed and yelled for blood like all the rest of the fans, almost in spite of ourselves. I threw Janice's hat into the rink, and Janice pushed some adolescent who was rooting for the visiting Blackhawks. When the Rangers lost, we got depressed beyond reason. We went home and made love mournfully. The next morning, when I came to my senses, I told Janice I never wanted to go to a hockey game again. I didn't like what it did to me. That's when Janice gave me that look. "It did what it did to you; why don't you let yourself enjoy it?"

"Because it's horrible, that's why. It brought out the worst in both of us."

"You're a sad case," she said. "You wouldn't know the worst in both of us if it stared you in the face. I'd never let myself get involved with someone like you. I mean that." And the next week Janice went to a hockey game by herself.

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When Janice threatens to throw me out unless I come up with my share of last month's rent, Josh generously offers to take me with him to Atlantic City, and I, for some reason, accept his offer. So we take an afternoon bus down and sit in the lobby of the Richmond Hotel, which reminds me of 1940: the faint odor of mildew, the overstuffed chairs, the faded oriental rugs. It is the kind of place where you'd expect to see only geriatrics and degenerates, but it turns out that the majority of the guests are semi-wealthy Jewish widows and divorcees who take their vacations in Atlantic City either because their parents used to take them there or because they have nowhere else to go. Josh is sitting back in his chair smoking a cigarette and I am nervously watching him. Finally a woman comes over to him and asks, "How have you been, Josh? Are you ready for an evening on the town?"

"I'm always ready, Ellie, but I brought a friend along tonight." Ellie looks in my direction as if noticing me for the first time. "Do you think we could find a lovely for him? From what I hear he's very good."

"Don't look at me," she says. "I don't want to break in a new one."

"Well, champ," Josh says, getting up from his chair, "I'll be back in a couple of hours. If someone comes up to you be very nonchalant about it. If not, start hustling the cocktail lounge. By nine, if they haven't found what they want, they're either ready to get drunk out of their minds or try anything."

After Josh leaves me I of course feel foolish, and of course no one comes up to me. In spite of the ridiculous situation, I feel somehow rejected. I must look inexperienced. But I know I can't back out, not unless I want to be thrown out of the apartment. And besides, I have a round-trip busfare invested in the project, so I know I'd better come up with something.

When Josh hasn't returned by ten-thirty, I do go into the bar and nurse a beer with my remaining change. My inability to be aggressive is very disturbing and it must show. Finally sometime after eleven a woman around forty-ish comes up to

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me and says, "Why the moping? Performance bad or business slow?"

"Oh," I say, trying to keep my voice at an even pitch, "I'm just sitting here."

"Oh," she nods, "I'm just sitting here too. Would you like to sit up in my room? I just love to sit with strange-looking men."

"Thanks," I say.

"Thanks yes, or thanks no?"

"Thanks yes."

She turns to the bartender. "A pint of Gordon's and a six-pack of tonic, Jim." Then she looks at me. "Is that OK?"

"It beats Schlitz."

"Damn right," she smiles. "Don't be so nervous. I have no diseases and I come from a long line of good families."

Somehow she manages to make me feel comfortable. When we get into her room I am surprised to find it's not a flea trap, but that the furniture is antiseptically modern, almost like a dormitory. There is a painting of the Steel Pier over the bed and the usual tourist information under the glass-top desk. The room is painted and not wallpapered as I had expected.

"My name is Marion. How can I put you at ease? Should we talk? Do you have time?"

"I have all night."

"Good. What do you do during the week?"

"Right now, nothing. I used to hold a very responsible position at the Red Barn before I was heard swearing in front of the customers."

"You're kidding."

"No, the Red Barn is no joke."

"I'll say. But I had you pegged as a college-type. Dropout, maybe, but definitely the type."

"You were right."

"But now you're living the underground life, right? It's more romantic."

"It's more nothing. I don't know what I'm doing any

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more than you do, although it's probably pretty simple. Like it's impossible for me to hold a job."

"Oh you're so dark. If I were the night manager of the Red Barn I probably wouldn't be able to hold a job either."

"Thanks."

"That wasn't a compliment. You're way too grim. Let's talk about me. What do you suppose I'm like?"

"Well, let's see. You must be lonely, unsatisfied, frustrated and generally miserable. And you probably don't have all your own teeth."

"True, I don't have all of my own teeth. All the rest is false."

"You're divorced."

"True."

"You like the seashore."

"False. I like to get away from New York and meet new men."

"Aren't there enough men in New York?"

"Only the ones I work for, and they are notable only for their lack of attractiveness. Listen, we should talk more and I haven't even poured you a drink. Could we go to bed first?"

She doesn't even wait for me to answer before she starts taking off her blouse. Her body is still attractive, more so perhaps because of the way she carries herself. Only now she makes me nervous because she is so accomplished, as though she were the prostitute and I were going to have my first sexual experience. The reversal is impossible to deal with. Moreover she is good in bed, there is no reason why she could not be living with a man and making him happy. Any man. Me.

But afterwards she is so tired she falls asleep in my arms. "We got a late start," she says. "Why don't you take fifty dollars out of my purse? Unless you can stay the night."

Her trust is difficult to understand. I want to tell her fifty dollars is too much, I haven't done anything. I should be paying her, I'd like to talk. When I wake up in the morning she is gone. There is fifty dollars on the dresser, and a note.

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"Thanks," it says. "I hope I'll see you again. You were very nice. Almost innocent. Marion."

When I get into the lobby Josh is sitting down reading a newspaper; he breaks out into a smile when he sees me coming out of the elevator. "So that's where you've been," he says. "I was beginning to think you'd taken the midnight bus home." When I say nothing he asks, "Was it a beast?"

"No, actually she was pretty terrific. I think I love her." We both laugh for an unreasonable amount of time, drawing attention to ourselves. In the morning the lobby is full of a different kind of clientele, the older people you would expect. They sit here reading newspapers, looking out windows, limping about with or without their canes, smelling the way you would expect old people to smell. I feel very uncomfortable and tell Josh I would like to leave.

"Do you think you'll ever come back?" he asks.

"If I don't get a job I probably might."

"I wouldn't get a job," he says. "I just made a hundred bucks last night."

"I know," I say, "but there's no *future* in it."

I finally found a job that lasted more than a month. Six weeks, to be exact, as a psychological testee for the space program. And this time nobody terminated it, the experiment simply ended. The experiment went as follows: first six of us were closed in the same room for a period of a week, then they studied us individually for another week to test how we had responded to the environment and to one another. Then we went back into the same room for another week. We knew each other by letter only (I was Q, and the other letters were A, G, L, R and Y), in order to protect ourselves in case we did anything embarrassing, which, as it turned out, we did. The purpose of the experiment was to see how enclosure affected group dynamics. My guess is that if they followed our experiment closely, they would never leave the earth again.

Of course the sampling was very strange. Only weird or desperate people would volunteer for such an experiment,

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and all of us looked slightly more deranged than your average space employee. We began by being very cordial to one another, almost flirtatious, but that broke down by the second day. One of the women, G, took off her clothes before she went to sleep. R said this disturbed him to no end, that given the circumstances it was unnatural and made it difficult for him to get to sleep. G said that was his problem, that it was her body and she was free to deal with it in the way she wanted, and that if she had to worry about every neurotic in the world before she did something she'd never do anything. Y took her side immediately and by the fourth night they were making love on G's bed, noisily and arrogantly. Although I sympathized with G's assertion, somehow I identified with the victim, R, and stayed up with him when he couldn't sleep. I told him it was impossible to control other people's behavior, no matter how much we might want to.

"What are you talking about?" he said. "I live here too. If we're going to have to live together we're going to have to be thoughtful of each other."

"What does being thoughtful mean?" another letter asked. "That no one can do what he or she wants?"

"Maybe since we don't know what thoughtful means, it will be easier to slit each other's throats," R said.

"Maybe it will," Y said.

For some reason they gave us all different kinds of food in differing amounts. At first this angered us all and brought us closer together to protest the way we were being manipulated. We knocked on the doors, Y put his fist through one of the walls and we refused to eat. But by the end of the first evening we were too hungry; those of us who didn't like what we had to eat tried to negotiate for something else. Strawberries made R break out in a rash. They had to know that. A, the quietest of all of us, hated liver vehemently. We made some trades, but eventually everybody felt somebody else was trying to take advantage of him or her, and soon people were throwing their food again, knocking on walls, begging to be let out.

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I found myself amazingly attracted to A. Perhaps because she was so quiet, almost intimidated by the group, or because she was so hard to get to know. Or perhaps because she didn't seem to notice me very much. Or because I was locked up in a room with five other people and I felt I had to be attracted to one of them. My choices were limited. Whatever the reason, when I did get up the nerve to tell her I was interested in her, she told me she found me totally unattractive, as ugly as the other letters who were trying to stab each other in the back. I said I needed to know what made her feel that way, that it would help me a lot to find out, that maybe I could change. She said there was no way of explaining something like that, that it was foolish and futile for me to try, that I should just try to accept things the way they were.

"You're so negative," I said.

"Only about you," she said.

For the rest of the week I was quiet, counting the days before I could leave the room. The books they left for us to read were boring, and almost everyone settled into watching TV in a trance; it was the most peaceful we had been with each other, at least after we were able to decide on a program to watch. Besides, I didn't want to read a book the thought mechanics from NASA brought in. What if they *wanted* us to read certain books to see what effect they would have on us. Baudelaire, Ross MacDonald, Desmond Morris, there's no telling what they could do to me.

Josh has been going down to Atlantic City more often, not only on weekends but two or three times during the week. I can't tell if it's because he needs the money or he needs to get out of the apartment. We all seem to be at loose ends, seeing each other only in passing, during occasional meals. The dirt is piling up in the corners. Josh has brought in his own mattress and sleeps in the corner by the door. We are now using paper plates and would use paper pots and pans if they made them. Josh also bought a color TV, which he keeps with him by his bed, but strangely none of us in the apartment find it

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soothing the way we had in the experiment. As soon as Josh turns it on Andy turns red and begins practicing scales on his violin. Janice says she almost vomits every time he turns it on. Not only is it stupid and boring, she says, but she can't stand the way they treat women on commercials and variety shows, like functional morons. Objectively, I have no objection to the television, but every time it goes on I get the chills, as though I were still locked in that room with all those people. I guess that's what the scientists would call a long-term effect.

Politics. Our world is so small sometimes it seems not to exist. And sometimes I think the television brought it all in. The more than usual crimes of violence, often only blocks away. What the news does is make us all afraid; it is the only show we all watch. Every day when I wake up now I am surprised to find myself here, alone, without our own invading army occupying our apartment house, gathering us all in a big stockade. Only there is a small feeling of satisfaction knowing that there is nothing they could make me do. I am totally unfit to do anything useful. On the other hand maybe they would just gas me to death.

But there is another kind of politics, more personal. Janice brought that into the house. She's now meeting with a group called Radical Lesbians. They meet at the apartment once a week and Josh can't stand it. It is a personal affront to him, to everything he stands for. When he walks in the door he makes dyke jokes, he takes a phony pugilistic stance. "You're all a bunch of psychopaths," Josh says. Most of the women ignore him or laugh at him, but one woman, Lucy Warnick, once spat in his face. He'll never forgive Janice for that. He refuses to leave the apartment when they meet. He turns on the television and makes a general pest of himself. Janice would love to tell him to get out, but by now he pays about two-thirds of the rent, and she is almost afraid he'll force her out of the apartment himself. Josh knows the women hate him as a symbol of oppression, which he is, but personally

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most of the women in the group seem to feel sorry for him.

Last night I came home and found Janice making love to another woman; it was a night I will not soon forget. For some reason when I was in the same room with her and Andy it did not affect me in the same way; there is a special kind of intimacy between two women I have not been able to break through. Janice looked up from the bed in a daze, almost as though I were not there. She turned away from me and said, "Would you please come back later?" and I left without speaking. I did not see the face of the other woman, only the outline of her body, which was as pale as the sheet she was lying on.

When I came back later that night I asked Janice, "Do you want to talk about it?"

"Talk about what?" she snapped. "My life is my life. Is there something you don't approve of?"

"No, I just thought you might want to talk about it."

"No, I guess I don't want to talk about it," she said with a little more tenderness, her voice fading away as though she were falling down a well.

That night I could not sleep. The smell of the two women was still on the sheets, Janice's aroma was separate and disturbing. Her body fluid spilled on the bed. Melodramatically I got sick to my stomach and walked around the Village all night. In the morning I did a laundry. What I would not admit to myself, what I could not admit to myself, was that Janice was moving further and further away from me, and there was nothing I could do about it.

The results of the study came out, a three hundred and fifty page report, which, as part of our payment, NASA gave us to read. Most of it was as boring as could be expected, but the transcript concerning how each of us responded to the other letters was fascinating. For most people I, as a letter, hardly existed, but when I was mentioned a strange pattern seemed to form: I was the letter most reluctant to express

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what I was feeling, they never knew if I meant what I said. I always went along with what was easiest for the group. I was never the person to turn on the television or begin an argument. Some people thought this meant I was pretty well-adjusted; others thought I just didn't know what I wanted. One person thought I had been planted there by NASA to watch the other letters. The rest of the report said nothing specific about me, but they concluded it was indeed safe for people to live in space for long periods of time.

When Janice did not come home last night I assumed she was sleeping with one of her friends. Still, it made Andy and me very nervous and we hardly slept. There is something very safe about a woman sleeping between two men, something neither of us had realized before. In the morning, though, one of Janice's friends barged into the apartment and said that Janice was in jail, that she had been arrested in a demonstration in front of the Women's House of Detention. A cop had beaten her head in. She needed two hundred and fifty dollars bail, or else she could rot in jail for months. Immediately Andy and I turned to Josh, the only one of us who could conceivably have scraped up that much money. "Don't look at me," he said, "I'm not giving any of my hard-earned money for a bunch of dykes. Let them go mug an old man."

"Josh," I said, "sometimes you're a first-class jerk."

My response surprised him. "You don't like it," he said, "move into the sewer."

Andy ignored our conversation and picked up his violin. "I'm going to the subway. If I go uptown to Lexington Avenue there's a slight chance I could get arrested, but I should be able to pick up at least forty bucks if I play all day."

"Don't be ridiculous, Andy. She needs two hundred and fifty. Pronto."

The woman had no patience with us. "You guys work it out however you can. Just remember she found this place and gave you all somewhere to stay. I've got a lot of other people

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to get in touch with. There are thirty sisters in jail and the cops are not very fussy about how they handle them."

"Sisters," Josh said. "Psychos is more like it."

With that comment everyone except Josh left the apartment. I went to the experiment center uptown but they said they had no work for me. They said that in a month they'd be performing a long-term weightless experiment and that if I leave my name, and so on. I left my name and left. The only other thing I could think of was Atlantic City. My only other source of income. I had new courage to face that lobby, strange women, a technical erection. I was only surprised at the immediacy I felt for Janice and the melancholy feeling that she would not appreciate it.

Ironically enough, coming down to Atlantic City to sleep with a forty year old Jewish woman is one of the most moral acts of my life. I am absolutely brazen at this point, coming up to women who look lonely, offering my company, getting refused without embarrassment. But it is a weekday night and things are very slow. It seems that the widows and divorcees must come down only for weekends, and I am surprised to find that until around ten o'clock there are a goodly number of octogenarian types hanging around the lobby. In a fleeting moment of fantasy I think of approaching one of them, but I am afraid they would call the cops and no one would bail *me* out of jail. Finally at ten-thirty, while I am sitting around drinking a beer, a reasonably ugly woman (closer to fifty than forty) comes up to me, very drunk. She reminds me of the woman Josh went off with the first night I was here, but she is obviously someone else.

"You're a fine looking boy," she says.

"Why thank you. Why don't you sit down?"

"And polite too? Have you been hanging around the Richmond very long?"

"No, not very."

"I didn't think so. I've never had you before."

"No you haven't, I'm sorry to say." The last phrase hurts as it comes out.

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"Are you expensive?"

"Sometimes."

"Well, at my age quantity counts as much as quality. I'm a lady, don't get me wrong, but there's only so much I can do before I get tired or run out of money. Have you had dinner yet?" When I shake my head no, she says, "I can go up to fifty if you spend the night, thirty if you don't."

"That's very generous."

"But you pay for the dinner and the drinks. And that's all the business I want to hear about."

"All right," I say, and I take her out on the boardwalk toward the Ritz-Carleton, which is about a six block walk. The boardwalk, except for a few drunks and a couple of police cars cruising on the wooden planks, is virtually empty. The woman, whose name is Edie, tells me this is the first time she's walked down the boardwalk in years. "With so many rapes and muggings it's not safe for a woman my age to walk the streets at night."

"Why do you come here, then, if you stay away from the ocean?"

She gives me a look that lets me know I am an absolute child and then changes the subject. Atlantic City. It seems like the perfect city for corruption.

Dinner is boring but tolerable. I nurse my own drink and discourage Edie from having too much to drink. At this point in the evening she wouldn't know the difference, and every two dollars is two dollars more toward Janice's bail.

I wonder what gave Janice the impetus to get herself in the position of being jailed. What is it that's so important to her about being a lesbian? I know I almost envy it, whatever it is. I know that all my old stereotypes about lesbians (bad relationships with their fathers, bad sex, castration complexes) have gone down the drain, and what I realize about Janice is that she doesn't find men tremendously exciting, and when I look around the apartment at Josh, Andy, and me, I am not surprised. We had nothing to offer her, there was nothing exciting about any of us.

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I remember one episode shortly after Janice had been fired from her modeling job. She said that getting fired was the best thing that could have happened to her, that instead of displaying her body she would now make use of it, this break in inertia would lead her to something else. I said that breaks in inertia in my life had only led to more inertia. She looked at me angrily, as if to say; "Don't tell me you're always going to be like this," and although I wanted to say "No," very much, I had said "No" to myself so many times that by now I hesitated to say it to anyone else. We did not talk for a long while. She began to pace. When I got up to touch her she moved away. "I'm not going to feel sorry for anyone," she said. "If you don't get better you'll get out." And while she was never quite strong enough to carry out that threat (she knew the right questions, where would I go? What would happen to me?) she began to keep her distance, as though I had the capacity to contaminate her.

The sexual experience itself, of course, was horrible beyond belief. Edie's body had long ago begun to decay in a way I had not seen before. If she had not been so drunk she would have seen the shock in my expression as she took off her clothes. What struck me was the looseness of skin, as though her bones had shrunk, as though her body had become too much for her tiny frame. I did not become impotent as I had feared, but stayed erect for nearly half an hour by an act of pure will. It amazed me to think of the areas in which I was able to maintain my strengths. What was obvious to me was that Edie did not enjoy a minute of it, she faked heavy breathing in a way that made me think she had forgotten how she used to do it. She called me darling like in the movies. She told me I was as big as she'd ever seen. I was quiet and in a few minutes she either fell asleep or passed out. I had nowhere to go so I lay in bed for my fifty dollars until morning. I did my best to keep from thinking, although I thought some about Janice and the experiment I had taken part in; somehow that was becoming the ultimate failure of

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my life, although I couldn't say exactly why.

I sat in the lobby with fifty crumpled dollars in my pocket and a promise from Edie that the next time she came to town we would go to the Steel Pier. For two hours I hoped someone would/would not come up to me, and luckily, I think, no one did. I read and re-read the newspaper three or four times, passing over the articles about corruption in government, the secret plans for new wars, the cutbacks of the poverty programs again. It all seemed so improbable to me I couldn't take it seriously. Then I left the Hotel and hitched back to New York, still not knowing how we would find the money to get Janice out of jail, knowing furthermore that I would not even be able to keep my job as a gigolo, that my promising beginning had been merely a freak accident.

When I got back to the apartment I found Andy sitting on the front steps holding his violin in his lap, oblivious to everything around him. Before I had a chance to ask him what he was doing, he said, "I wouldn't bother trying to get back into the apartment if I were you. Josh has changed the locks and is standing behind the door with a machete knife."

"Are you serious?"

"If I weren't serious do you think I'd be sitting here on the steps? He's got all my music locked up with him and his two gigolo friends are keeping him company."

"Has he been on junk?"

"I don't think so. You see I pawned his color TV for a hundred bucks, and apparently he's ready to kill us for it."

"You what?"

"I hated that TV, and it was the only way, short of robbing a bank, of getting enough money to get Janice out of jail."

"Andy, how could you be so stupid?"

"If Janice were here he'd never have gotten away with this. She would have thrown him right out on his ass. But now he's pulling some masculine something, holding on to his territory because he can't watch The Hollywood Squares. I

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told Janice never to let him move in."

I gave Andy what was left of the fifty dollars plus whatever little money I had. It turned out that by pooling our resources, including the money from the TV, we had just enough to get her out. In the meantime, while Andy went to the jail, I said I would try to reason with Josh. But when I knocked on the door he looked through the keyhole and wouldn't let me in. "Josh," I said, "Andy made a stupid mistake. He promised me he'd get your tube out of hock. Today. Honest."

"Why don't you two dyke-loving thieves go find yourselves a place to stay. I've got my property to protect."

"Listen, it was all a mistake. Andy needed the money for Janice, it wasn't for himself. He just wasn't thinking straight."

"Well he's got plenty of time to think straight now. I can't believe how you could have done this to me, after how I showed you how you could make all the money you'd ever need. It's not right."

"I didn't steal anything from you."

"And I could never live in the same house with a dyke and a couple of thieves again. No matter what."

"Josh, I've got my goddamned clothes in there."

"I pawned them. I would have expected something like this from a creep like Andy, but you, what did I ever do to you?"

I was getting tired of trying to explain things to Josh, and it was clear that he had no intention of giving up the apartment. If for no other reason, his pride seemed sufficient to keep us thrown out. I tried to be angry at Andy but it was impossible, and there's a good chance I would have pawned Josh's TV if I had thought of it first. I sat on the steps wondering how Janice would feel about losing her apartment. I thought that if anyone could have changed Josh's mind it was her. But when Andy came back alone I knew that something was wrong. He was out of breath.

"She's already out," he said.

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"You mean somebody else supplied the bail?"

"Apparently. Some legal defense committee got the bail lowered and they had some slush fund stored away somewhere."

"Then where is she? Why didn't she come back home?"

"She already did, but Josh wouldn't let her in either. Now she's staying at a women's commune on the West Side. She's apparently getting very involved with one of the women there."

"A commune? After everything I tried to set up here? I don't believe it."

"She said she doesn't want to see you. Or me."

"It figures."

"Here's your sixty bucks. I think I know a place where I can stay near Julliard. There's an old fag professor of mine who always thought I had the cutest bowing technique."

"Very funny."

I watched Andy leave and somehow tried to assess my situation honestly. The woman I cared for was a lesbian and everything I said rubbed her the wrong way. I could not get along with large groups of people. My finest hour was sleeping with a fifty-year-old drunk in a totally futile act. I have somehow hurt Josh in a way I would not have thought possible. In fact, I marvel at how easy it is to hurt people, and wonder why hurting people is not the national sport. Or if it is, how I learned to play so well, and why it has never done me any good.

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*Robert Bly*

# FIVE PROSE POEMS FROM *FRIEND, THIS BODY IS MADE OF CAMPHOR AND GOPHER WOOD*

## WALKING SWIFTLY

When I wake, the sheep are eating apple peels just outside the screen, the trees are heavy, soaked, and hushed, the sun just rising. All seems calm, and yet somewhere inside I am not calm. We live in wooden buildings made of two by fours, making the landscape nervous for a hundred miles. And the Emperor when he was sixty called for rhinocerous horn, for sky-blue phoenix eggs shaped from veined rock, dipped in rooster blood. Around him the wasps kept guard, the hens continued their patrol, the oysters open and close all questions. The heat inside the human body grows, it does not know where to throw itself—for a while it knots into will, heavy, burning, sweet, then into generosity, that longs to take on the burdens of others, then into mad love that lasts forever. The artist walks swiftly to his studio, and carves oceanic waves into the dragon's mane.

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## THE LEFT HAND

My friend, this body is made of camphor and gopher wood. Where it goes, we follow, even into the Ark. As the light comes in sideways from the west over damp spring buds and winter trash, the body comes out hesitatingly, and we are shaken, we weep, how is it that we feel no one has ever loved us? This protective lamp-lit left hand hovering ever its own shadow on the page seems more loved than we are . . . . When we step into a room where we expect to find someone, we do not believe our eyes, we walk all the way over the floor and feel the bed . . .

## THE LARGE ANIMALS

Somewhere in the treeless steppes, lines of horses are galloping. The horses gallop east, each with its rider, hard, fighting only the world, a strip of cloth raised over the rider's head, flapping, representing his body. They meet a line of fire, over which the horses leap. Then a stream, they leap higher, they land with hooves pushing into the bank. Then a ravine—space stretched out sideways—a few horses fall in. Now they meet their greatest obstacle, flesh . . . it is a Garden of Eden, elephant trunks reach lazily up into tree branches, and the gazelles hurry over the plain like blood corpuscles in a storm, flock on flock, even the monkeys have hair. And the horses slow, they become confused among so many gentle animals, the riders look to the side and behind them, turning in their saddles to see the large animals peacefully grazing behind.

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## A DREAM ABOUT TILES ON THE FLOOR

How difficult it is to follow the body in dreams! Last night such intricate powerful dreams, each tile laid down of luminous glazed clay . . . the dream told me that in the Teacher you do not have the senses, but the longing for the senses. That longing is terrible, and terrifying . . . the herd of gazelles running over the savannah—and intense and divine, and I saw it lying over the dark floor, inside the floor . . . in layers there. In the Thinker you do not have feeling but the longing for feeling—that longing makes the lines of force at the bottom of the well. At the bottom of his well there are lumps of dirt that heal the humpbacked, wheels that roll slowly upward from the ocean, and prowl around the boundaries of the desert, keeping the meditator inside his own chest . . .

## GOING OUT TO CHECK THE EWES

My friend, this body is food for the thousand dragons of the air, each dragon light as a needle. This body loves us, and carries us home from our hoeing.

It is ancient, and full of the bales of sleep. In its vibrations the sun rolls on under the earth, the high spouts over the ocean curl into our shoulders . . . water revolves, spouts seen by skull eyes at mid-ocean, this body of herbs and gopher wood, this blessing, this lone ridge patrolled by water . . . I get up, morning has come, the stars still out, the black winter sky looms over the unborn lambs. The barn air is cold before dawn, the gates slow . . .

This body longs for itself far out at sea, it floats along in the black heavens, it is a brilliant being, locked in the prison of human dullness . . .

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# I'll Always Remember Lavender

## George Stiles

It was grandmother who encouraged me to leave school, just as it was, just where I was. "With your education," she explained, "you're practically sure."

"Of what!"

"Don't be laggard."

"Before I give up school I ought to know a few things." I don't say what. I have no prejudices. (Then.)

"That's the trouble with all you Americans."

"Isn't everybody?"

"What?"

"American?"

"Not me."

"Of course you must be."

"Against my will. Anyway."

"I'm used to school," I defend it.

"You didn't like it, I thought."

"I like the fifth grade."

"Girls? I warned you, I warn you. They're all little bitches. I've watched them playing their games. Bare all the way up to

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their pink little asses, that you can see without trying, they show them to every passerby under those high-up little dresses. An old woman like myself with no eyesight.''

''You don't even wear glasses.''

''I don't want to be forced to look at what God never intended that I witness.''

''God.''

''There, they make atheists of you.''

''It's a Catholic school.''

''You read books. And that newspaper.'' The *New York Times*. (I confess it.)

''They won't like my leaving in the fifth grade.''

''They will, when you're a banker.''

''A banker.''

''You want to make money, don't you? Don't you? Don't you?''

''I guess it's up to me, or somebody.''

''Money is made in banks. Bankers get it at a discount. A banker gets discounts on all the money made on the premises, and everybody else—the whole world—has to pay the regular rates. Well?''

''Who told you? Where did you find that out?''

''Bankers live in homes with trees growing out of their front yards.'' She rattled the newspaper at me. She has been reading the obituary. (It was she who gave me a taste for it.) This day it was about a banker living (dying) in a white Ohio home with a white fence rail around it, a hill, a veranda, a front yard and his family of a wife and three growing young Americans with pride of heritage.

''I doubt I can become a banker.''

''You've lost your faith. Pray.''

''You pray practically a hundred percent of the time in the fifth grade. And I've lost my faith. You said so.''

''Pray to get it back.''

''I'm just getting used to the fifth grade.''

''You'll get used to money. Nothing easier.''

It never made that much difference to me, but I am sup-

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posed to be in the sixth grade. (You can't tell the difference.) But I feel as though I am where I have practically always been. In the fifth. Sister Mary Rosemary was our fifth grade teacher. When we went into the sixth, Sister Mary Rosemary answered a call to come along with us. We learned everything she had just taught us in the fifth; she told the same stories she had told the previous class (us), prayed the same prayers at the same time; had the same favorite girls, handed out the same sweet threats, read to the class out of the same book, passed around the same divine pictures (Holy Mary, named after her), and fell asleep the same hours, mornings and afternoons. The sisterhood recognized this, of course. It sent in glasses of milk a couple of times a school day from the convent kitchen which you could hear and look down into from our windows. (There were rumors about it. It was supposed to be buttermilk, we heard. It looked like a strong chalky medicine. And when she had drunk it, Sister Mary Rosemary fell asleep.)

Sister Mary Rosemary would settle into her peace the way I settled into the fifth grade, accepting that I might never get out of it, if Sister Mary Rosemary stayed with our class right along until graduation. Beyond that there was nothing of interest to us anyway. People like bankers, women no more like girls than grasshoppers are like butterflies, men with their black-rimmed glasses and dark leather cases who were supposed to be fathers, no one I had ever exchanged talk with, or whose talk I needed to, or could, understand.

You could look down and watch them bake in the convent kitchen. In the middle of a dream the sounds of silverware, boilers, the oven opening and slamming shut, kettles and cups and saucers, the timing bell going off and the sister cook giving instructions to someone out of sight, crowded into my unconsciousness like summoning pangs. It was the only time I felt anything. Hunger. But I hungered for nothing. There was nothing I cared to eat. All I felt was hungry, like Pussy sitting up when she hears her dish being handled back in the kitchen alongside the garden.

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Not that I didn't like spring, which was all during the fifth grade. Spring turning to summer was like a warm sleep, Sister Mary Rosemary sitting over her milk (Pussy again) and peacefully going off. Below the window was a schoolyard of flagstone. I don't know what flagstone is, I probably got it wrong, from grandmother, a countrywoman, who noticed paving more than other, different, Americans do. A handball, or tennis ball and sometimes a fresh baseball bounding for yards on the flagstone, or against the building blocks of the school. A sunny, peaceful, sleeping sound, though it would sometimes wake Sister Mary Rosemary out of her sleep, cutting it short, though at times it wouldn't. The bread truck coming up the street every day exactly on time, like the glass of milk arriving from the convent kitchen. It was a sound to me because there was a bell, probably connected with each loaf of bread that was sold. Rnnggg. Like a cash register on rubber wheels, wheeling up the residential block where the sunshine thick as buttermilk spread between the school and the apartment buildings, filling space like a deep vessel containing something yellow, golden, something mysteriously magical in a place without shadows, like this place, where Sister Mary Rosemary, and all of us, all of us, the little girls, the little bitches, exposing their thighs and hiding nothing, could hide nothing under their weightless dresses, all, the sisterhood and the fatherhood, the priesthood, the music teacher thumping the piano every morning in the convent music room, the mothers in the fifth grade and the classless black girls who sometimes waited in the rain to claim us and dropped us off at home, everything exposed to the contagion of peace, lured to it by promise, contained in it, as I was, through weakness or ordination, shared it like the diseased their mortal symptoms.

I sensed that I was not prepared for anything more than that, or less. I had never thought of banking as something you did. It was something they did. If it was shameful or, like Sister Mary Rosemary settling into sleep like Pussy after her morning milk, a law of nature, you had to have it in you,

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in your nature, the way Sister Mary Rosemary had the something in her, in her bloodstream, that rose to a certain level at a certain hour of the day and struck her eyes shut, even in the act of prayer, in the very middle of the divine act of prayer.

Grandmother had arranged the interview. Through God, I trust. She just told God what was expected, and the interview arranged itself. It could be done that way, at that time. An interview with a banker behind closed doors that were secret and lettered PRIVATE. An afternoon with one of the little girls that grandmother had witnessed with naked legs under very high dresses. You prayed to God and it came out. Maybe not as you expected. God can surprise. He often has me.

You ascended in a private elevator to a door lettered PRIVATE. Nothing surprised me. I knew as much. I had never been this close to a girl in a colored uniform with brass buttons and a military cap but she didn't surprise me. I stood behind her, single file. When the elevator settled to rest, I stepped out from in back of her.

"Thank you for having me, Mr. Masters," I call out. A man approaches and grips me. I have never had a handshake, didn't like it, knew what it was supposed to represent, the brotherhood, the society of men, masters like Mr. Masters, bankers who made money and stacked it in their vaults. How could it mean anything to me? I had never been master of anything. I was prepared to be a banker if God could arrange it. I doubted. Doubt is the terrible punishment inflicted upon the wicked. I shall have to guard my doubt, accept my wickedness.

"Mr. Masters is expecting you. Follow me, please, and do watch your step."

I follow watchfully, expecting to go plunging down into the vault where Mr. Masters (I had shaken hands with a clever fellow, not one of the order, young, something between a boy and a master) controlled his money. I went down one step, doing just what he did, following, as God no doubt ordains that you should, else should I have been approaching

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Mr. Masters like this, my hand out?

"This is he, Mr. Vice-President. God, you know . . . " They conducted affairs in whispers. Mr. Masters turns his face to me. It surprises me, he is so familiar. That is, no stranger.

He looks exactly like a man. Glasses. (Black-rimmed.) Gray hair growing from his ears, turning to white as it goes round outside his scalp and covers the top, though not absolutely.

"Did you have a pleasant trip up?"

"Thank you for having me here, Mr. Masters."

I wanted to tell Mr. Masters about the girl belted into her braided uniform with the gold and eagle buttons but he wouldn't want to listen to that, I knew. He would sense that I preferred to be in gold and violet and embroidery, like her, than in his and his young fellow's banker suits. Doubt made itself known to him wherever it lodged and he would stamp it out wherever it exposed itself. His man's face conveyed all this to me just in looking down into mine from the leather cushion that kept his soft seat from contact with the hard wood which came, Sister Mary Rosemary had conveyed to her fifth and sixth grade class when her sleeping sickness permitted, from the trees that bankers like Mr. Masters grew in their front yards for their American families to spread themselves under, and whittle hearts on, and their initials, and the dates, from one year to the next, that remained behind as witness; as the sounds in the convent kitchen and music room, the sounds and even the smell of the bakery truck in the residential street, would be there when I was not.

"What about being a banker makes you want to be one?"

"Money?"

"Don't you have enough money?"

"Do you?"

"There are other ways of making money. Have you tried?"

"Not presently."

"How old are you? What grade are you? How long will it be before? Do your homework, do you? Arithmetic? How very important. Books? Very, very. The right ones, certainly.

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I'm a father, you see. You must have read about it. In the *New York Times*. A picture of my tree. You didn't. Beautiful tree. Children beautiful. Beautiful wife. Beautiful Ohio. Beautiful America. Beautiful eyes. Cat's eyes. I'll call you cat's eyes. Stand up, cat's eyes. Come over here, cat's eyes. Pussy, pussy, pussy, puss-puss . . . ''

I stood up. I went over. Mr. Masters wheels his soft seat around, his legs apart he leans back, opens his mouth, sucks in air and puts his two hands in his gray pockets, shoving his thighs out at me.

''How tall are you, cat's eyes?''

I stood as tall as I could. I could look down on the brown spots on Mr. Masters' head.

''Taller than I am.'' He gives a scream of a laugh and ducks his head.

''Do you want anything, Mr. Vice-President?'' The young fellow is in the doorway, under PRIVATE in gold lettering across the brown trim.

Mr. Masters does not raise his head above the desktop. He starts opening and closing the desk drawers, slamming them, banging one shut, then hauling another open and scratching around inside with both hands, clawing at the papers, notebooks and banker's stuff that he was able to reach without looking.

''Have you run across the agenda? What did you do with the monthlies? Check your procedurals. Isn't this your lunch? Go, go to lunch. I'll take mine here.''

''The monthlies were due yesterday. As usual. Is there anything else?''

''Not at all. It's all here under my hand.''

All the time Mr. Masters was answering, he kept his head below his desk, his cheeks pink and moist, from keeping his head down, I thought. His blood was all in his cheeks and ears, and his lips were red, red and stretched across his face, with his tongue and gums showing. He was looking up at me from below his desktop. *''Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy.''*

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(Pussy never would answer to anything like that. People without cats talk like that, as if cats can be called. Some cats come to you when you say *pussy* at them, or make whispery sounds, as Mr. Masters was doing, hiding behind his big office desk. It's just that they know you can be fooled. They're hungry, and if you feed them after you've whispered at them and called them pussy they'll eat the food and not let you know that you're being fooled.)

Mr. Masters didn't show his head until the door slammed. "Is he gone?"

"The door is closed." It is PRIVATE again.

He sits up. "How much do you weigh, cat's eyes?" He squeezes the inside of my thigh, high up. "How big are you?" He puts his hand down under me and raises it and closes his fingers around it, weighing it. "Oh, big, big, big, big! Pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, pussy, *puss*."

"What is this—feel day?" It's what I hear fifth grade girls say to the boys in the upper classes, the big boys, playing with each other in the schoolyard. What else do you say? I didn't know, not having had an interview before.

"You're going to be big. Make big money. I'll show you how big a banker is."

"What are you trying to do—give me a good time?" I had heard this in the schoolyard, too, but not from one of the little girls. A big girl was saying it to a boy in her own class. And she laughed. I laugh, just like her.

"Cat's eyes." He slaps his thighs. "Sit down here, cat's eyes."

I was running out of what to say to a banker. Already. I considered for a while, though of course not sitting in Mr. Masters' lap. If that door opened and if the fellow came in again . . . he had slammed out of here last time. And what would God think?

"You're hurting me."

It was the right thing to say, and the right way to say it, and it was true—he *is* hurting me. The only one to put their hand to me—since I am this grown at least—is me, and then

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I know to be careful. It was odd how the world knew just what you did to yourself, no matter how private. The eyes are windows through which the soul reveals itself. There is absolutely no way of making the window PRIVATE. Not even Sister Mary Rosemary could shut her eyes to everybody else's at all times. Though Sister Mary Rosemary's would never expose such as this to the sisterhood. But she had no need of money, big money.

"Big," he says, and squeezes and lets me drop.

All at once I feel humiliation, as I always do when my body goes its own way. I would have to ask a banker to let me go to the bathroom.

But Mr. Masters is not a big banker for nothing. I don't know how many times he has interviewed but judging from his experience it must have been often. He understood my body and you respect anybody for that.

"Do you want to go to the boy's room?" Without waiting, he stands up. In size he is as big as he says. He stands over me. "I'll take you inside myself." He takes my hand and leads me back into the office. The door of the boy's room is open, wide open. A man's room. Everything is lavender. The walls. The basin. The toilet bowl. The toilet paper. It is all a very clean lavender. "What a little hand," he says, holding it. "It's cold as an old whore's kiss," and he whoops. I don't think he expected me to laugh, too. "Where else are you cold?" he questions. "I hope you're not cold all over." My body just goes its own way. I couldn't help its being cold. If it was.

Mr. Masters goes right down on his knees there. I had seen men kneeling before. The priests were all big men and in their cassocks they looked wide and big, like the sisters, and they would kneel in the confessional, say, or at the gold altar rail, so that I'm accustomed to a man being about the same size as me, the way Mr. Masters is, down on his knees in the lavender boy's room.

"Now you're as big as me—or I'm as little as you," Mr. Masters says. "Here. Do you want us to let your little

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jimmy out of there? He must be suffocating in there. Let's open it and let 'im out. Give 'im some air.''

It didn't seem strange what a big banker like Mr. Masters knew about me. Until I was about six somebody had to let down my pants, or unbutton me so that I could use the toilet bowl without flooding myself. Even later, at school, some of the older girls—they'd be about eight, or nine—would lead me down—through the rat's cellar—to one of the toilets in the basement. Usually, it would be their own. They'd unbutton me and then turn their backs, though not invariably. It was stopped after awhile, but if it started again I would not have minded that, not even now. And Mr. Masters knew, almost as if he'd been informed. I wasn't surprised. When I stepped onto that elevator and the girl in the parade uniform rode me up right into his office, it was all like something that is to happen to us when we are older, when we're called up to be redeemed, or to have our errors and failings and sins of omission and commission reviewed. An ascension. I had never understood in anything but my faith how it was supposed to work.

Mr. Masters acted surprised at all the buttons. My buttons are metal—a gray metal. And it looked as if he'd never been this close to the underwear I had on. They are long and heavy—thick—and with a lot of buttons, too, all the way up and down and run very close together. I really preferred the girls to him. Their fingers never hurt anything.

''Your hands are so big.'' I never meant to back away but I must have. He slanted, or leaned his gray suit toward me, and looked unbalanced. I knew how many buttons there were to go. I was counting.

Mr. Masters' forehead was creased and spotted and I could smell him sweating. The boy's room (he'd called it) smelled nice, sweet, like lavender, like a toilet counter at the drug store, or the soap and lotions section of Woolworth's. And so his sweating didn't matter. My own did. Because I never do.

Mr. Masters must have been ashamed for me. Boys that got interviewed in private didn't wear underwear with that many

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buttons, didn't have tin buttons on their pants, the way I did, probably didn't sweat and had jimmies—as he called them—that came out a lot faster than mine. As it was he had to search around. It was like earlier when he was going through things in his drawer and hiding his head and looking up at me, whispering and calling Pussy as loud as he could at the top of his breath. He was hurting me again and I know he didn't mean to. It's just that his hands are big and a man's and I'm little and a boy, though I never thought that until I saw myself in the palm of his hand.

I was glad his hands were warm, though. He looked cold. They might have been cold, as he said mine were, though I don't feel cold. He *looked* to you as if his hands might be cold, and this might have encouraged me to back away, though not far, because the boy's room door was just at the back of me. No, his hands were a little different than I was expecting, that's all—soft and dry, lady-like, the one that touched me was, and with dark, brown freckles down to the knuckles, I saw.

You didn't have to unbutton every button—the girls sometimes did but I never had to—and he'd reached in, in up to his wrist, and then drew his hand back out with his fingers closed around it, as if he was afraid he would drop it, or lose it, or it was a bird, or a pet that might get loose if he didn't act careful, keeping his hand closed around it and then letting it open very slowly, taking the chance finally that it wouldn't fly out, though how could it, of course, and where could it go?

Not that I knew any more about it than he seemed to. I was just as interested, too. He held it there in his palm, inspecting it, letting me wait, and I wondered. Just how many interviews had gone on here? It's only that he hadn't seen mine before, I guess, that Mr. Masters acted the way he did about it. Everybody is different, or I ought to be, and I must be. Mine certainly was, from what it was before and how I expected it to be. I looked down at it along with him. I wouldn't have recognized it. Jimmy. It may have been that

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his hand was hot and awfully soft for a man that big—if he'd been cold he'd not've got it out of there—but it did something it'd never done before, never that I remember.

I would have felt shame if I hadn't been feeling surprise at seeing it in just that new way, pale and smooth, like a bone-handled knife I owned once and lost, and strange to me because it was lying now in his hand and not as I ordinarily see it, part in and part out, and anyway way down below my belt-buckle and not that easy to see, either. It stirred by itself, like a little bird's wing stiffening out, stretched and lifted itself by itself off his palm. Even I knew what it meant, and is supposed to mean, and I ought to've been humiliated again in front of a banker for the way your body acts, going its way without you, like mine, like this. I couldn't talk from surprise. And I was feeling big, as big as Mr. Masters said I must be, bigger. There are things you don't dislike or like, accept, turn down or as much as question. That was one and this was one time. I'll always remember lavender.

It wasn't for long, for hardly more than it took to raise and straighten itself and hold itself steady, like it was learning to, the way I must have been trying to balance myself standing when I was starting to teach my legs to walk, back when I had to, though I don't clearly remember. Mr. Masters was looking, I saw, as if he forgot he was on his knees, and this was the boy's room, and that he was supposed to be out there making money, instead of in here, among all the smells that I like, and with his hand out, as if he didn't know yet there was nothing in it.

I'm sorry, Mr. Vice-President, I wanted to console Mr. Masters, but you can see it goes its own way. I was feeling something though, and it was not sorry. Pride? Something like pride. It couldn't be all pride, not if there was shame. It couldn't be all shame. Pride alone is pure.

But I never had the chance to explain that or anything. Right in back of me and on the level of my scalp came some fast loud knocking on the door. Down and up, the noise of a fist being run down the length of the wood and up, throwing

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itself against the panel and running up some more, and down, up, I counted, and down. I always do count, to escape confusion.

"Mr. Vice-President—Mr. Vice-President, sir! Are you in there, Mr. Vice-President? Sir."

"Button yourself," Mr. Masters said and I didn't recognize his voice. "Straighten your clothes." I *was* buttoning myself. I *was* straightening my clothes. And I was counting besides.

"Oh, Mr. Vice-President, sir!" The voice outside traveled right through the boy's room door.

"Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes . . . (Button yourself.)"

"A telephone call, sir. On the premium line."

"Yes yes yes yes yes yes yes. I'll take it. In here."

"On the extension? Impossible, sir. It has to be . . . " (Muffle, mumble, cough-cough.)

"In that case . . . Are you quite ready . . . ? Let me look." Mr. Masters climbed off his knees and disappeared almost out of reach high above me. Then he looped himself in his buttoned gray jacket and vest over the wash basin, ran the taps loudly on his two hands, unfolded a white linen towel carefully and carefully rubbed every finger dry, turned his hands over and did the same thing with a different clean towel that he had to unfold the same way, holding it with the tips of his fingers, as though not wanting anything contaminated. Shame, I thought to myself, is contamination with pride, not saying it, though, to Mr. Masters. I doubt he would have listened, or heard, or cared about the subject. Not with the knocking at the door. Not with that fellow laying in wait right outside the boy's room. Not with a telephone call that changed Mr. Masters' expression to what it was. I was slow and not very good buttoning myself and he shook his head. I stopped what I was doing, of course. I know how to act about disapproval. Stop whatever you are doing and begin again but not at once and never hurriedly and not the same thing.

And so I was still unbuttoned when I came out of the boy's room with the vice-president right in back of me. I believe I

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expected the young fellow not to notice though when he did I was not surprised. I kept my hand over myself and just hoped nothing showed.

He was flat against the wall outside the door that he'd been pounding with his fists. His face was red, like someone choking on something, something that he was still trying to swallow. He got himself highly excited about a telephone call. Or maybe he had to use the boy's room more than I did. Than I still did.

"Right over this way," he says, and nudges my elbow. The elevator was right there, with the girl standing in the open door.

"Thank you for . . ."

He didn't let me thank him or take his hand away from my elbow until I stepped onto the elevator. "You're a wicked little shit," he told me. "Watch your step." The elevator operator slid the door closed in his red face. She was not the girl who had ridden me up, though the same uniform made them more like each other than they were. I was feeling confusion, not about whether I was buttoned, because I was, I was sure now, but because I was still the way I was back there in the boy's room. I could see, if I didn't feel it, anybody could, the girl, too, if she looked. She was facing front but she had only to turn her head and look down. The tin buttons push straight out, about a foot, it felt, and I was experiencing the confusion, as the fathers would say, of pride and shame, worldly contamination. I moved back into the elevator and behind the girl, so that my shame would be at least invisible to woman's sight, that might be given mortal offense.

We slipped from floor to floor, though without a stop, then slowed, the girl guiding the car with a hand gently on the lever, her back to me, her smell in my nostrils. The elevator landed softly, the girl turned back and away from the door toward me and, just inches from her but invisible to her, a spasm surprised me. I shut my eyes on her and something cold, like the breath of ice, was shaken from an unexpected

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place in me and splashed against my skin high upon one thigh. It settled like a snowflake or a droplet of icy rain and then dissolved into warm moisture. I opened my eyes to face the door.

"Watch your step," the girl calls, as though to a carful of passengers and when I turn to her to thank her I saw her nostrils twitch. I prayed that what I had experienced in the elevator had no betraying smell. But I saw that her face reflected nothing that I could read there and I was sorry that the girl who had carried me down was not the same one who had borne me up. I felt change under way in my nature, if no more than a droplet at a time, no more than the transient pressure, light, cold, and troubling, upon and beneath my putrifying flesh. I felt tempted to tell her or someone all that I understood now and was undergoing and thinking here in her presence, about her person and everything else that occupies you on the way down from somewhere above, but she gave me a look and left me standing in the lobby of gilt like the best gold, feeling like what that excited young fellow said I was when I came out of the boy's room with my hand over my buttons. Like a wicked little shit. I still didn't understand what was wicked. I mean, about me. That's where you need somebody else. Grandmother or somebody else. To make sense about you. To explain to you. To counsel you. Console you. Lie to you.

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*James Galvin*

# SNOWLIGHT

When my sister was small, father carried her everywhere in a woven pack-basket. Once he killed a deer with her strapped to his back. She moved and spoiled his first shot, and the deer ran off with one shattered hind leg trailing like smoke. Two miles they ran, stopping to shoot six times. My sister finally stopped screaming, but she says her ears still ring.

My parents never said a word one way or another, but on the day before her husband died, my grandmother swears on the souls of saints she heard a banshee. Her sister, Ruth, heard it; but my sister and I were too young to be listening.

When she heard the cry, Grandmother was weaving a rug from colored rags and scraps of cloth. Her rugs began in the center and wound outward until they grew almost too large for rooms. They covered her lap and flowed to the floor, so that, to a child, she looked like the white peak of a mountain.

When Ruth shot herself, Father wrapped her body in one of my grandmother's rugs. When he returned from town, he hung the rug, like a salted hide, on the back fence. He left it there, between the tool shed and forge, for twenty years. Now it's little more than a spot on the fence, the gray boards, bleached white.

Father says the worst thing is a windless December night with no moon, no stars, just snowlight glowing in through the windows, lighting the path to the springhouse. He says his ears ring so loud he can't sleep, and he thinks of the boot-hammer in the shed, lying by the fenceposts; or the ring of steel on the anvil, someone forging hinges.

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# INHERITANCE

The trap had been set in the middle of the workshop floor, out where anyone could have seen it wasn't even baited. It had a musty smell that was cold and irresistable, like an island, a lake, or a rusted steel rose. Setting it was not a question; it was a demand. Behind the chains and sawblades on the north wall of the shop, I found the packrat's nest, his fetishes:

*Some wool from a saddle blanket*
This is for horses grazing knee-deep in evening light and prairie grass; for wishing I was on another hill, wishing I was here.

*A cactus blossom*
When the last snow melts, this is for its falling; for the cracked mud I see behind the shallow blue of the sky. When the red flower closes at dusk, it climbs into my shirt, and opens there like a heart.

*A piece of glass*
This is for the lover of two women: one who has left, one who waits; for the ice that covers lakes, giving its light to air, its shadows to water.

*A squirrel's paw*
This is for the cut, waiting inside the edge of the knife; for losses; for everything given.

*A feather*
Each fall the raven leaves me his north country, bad weather and promises, his feathers full of summer air, so green it looks black.

*Three keys*
These are for three wrong answers to every question, three wrong questions to every answer; for three keys here in my hand.

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*Robert Lundquist*

## A PLACE FOR US TO SIT UNTIL MORNING

It is like drowning,
The water of the eyes spills back into the head
It coats the skull like honey
Until you can no longer hear the breathing.

And the breath?

The tongue patted the breath into buttons
To be sewn to the heart.

And the heart?

A fist soft even when clenched.

Was there a needle?

Yes, the needle slipped into the lungs
Where the breath first burned.

And the flame?

It is the tongue of the animal
Beginning to lap at the base of our spine.

What is the spine?

It is the loom.

And the thread?

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The wet web in which we float.

Have we enough?

Yes, enough to knit the blood filled suit.

And the blood?

The rain clotted in the boards of this dark room.

And the room?

A place for us to sit until morning.

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*Richard Elman*

## SECOND RUMINATION

*(for Rosalyn and Herbert)*

Very old bodies always seem to be melting
like fetuses, or flaccid smelly large white lumps
of mozarella cheese. They are as shapeless
as fish eggs on a pond, as if every cell
were attenuated in some viscous
infinite ejaculent of primal form
to be a sprawl. See how they shift
at the beach or sunbathing by a pool
the fleshy parts of themselves they have
ill-used for so long toward various poorly defined
conjunctions of muscle over bone.
Oiled for the sun, they resemble
giant halibut or flounder. But then
it sometimes seems we miss the pleasures
of their dishevelment, that their flesh
can be imagined drooling beneath their frames
in long volutes—so in need of being held together
by our arms
are they after being so mishapen by a life.
Some have opened themselves wider than they could care
to remain alive. Now, again, they need to be
sealed, closed off, somehow made porous
but invulnerable, as inside egg shells,
or as if the caress of our bodies
with so much imminent powder and ash
could have the properties of certain permeable cloths.
Why do we turn away from them
because they carry within their flesh
these old scandals of mortality
our bodies have been so programmed to affirm?

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Always we're seeking to refute them
as though to agree all the more we will someday be as abject
before the capitulation of specific forms
in this general abasement of muscle and bone
to flesh. Are we compassionate?
They are the nightmares of our souls.
Ectoplasmic visions. Incontrovertible
blobs of evidence linked by some history
to an intelligence we fear. Even
without their faces we would know them
from the shoulders down beyond their portmanteau
bellies to those trembling nests of warm jelly
in which they hide their genitals
like easter eggs, or tarnished bits
of family plate. They come to us annealed,
zippered and pocked, fat waffled,
inflated here, deflated somewhere else, satinned,
or they come bandy-legged and spattered,
like lead that has dribbled off a mold,
and so frail it seems we can snap them
into pieces between our fingers, but always
they come to us, daring our reproaches,
demanding we acknowledge some complicity
in that humiliating fate
which is so much more dramatically foretold
in the flesh of humans than in animals. How
can we benefit from the warmths of so much
seeming compost? To be as alive
as they are within such warm lubricious sacks
reproaches us unless we agree we can love
beyond the limits of our documented selves.

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# NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

## FICTION

**Alice Adams** (*Flying*) has appeared regularly in *The New Yorker*. *McCalls* and *The Atlantic*. She has been represented in every O'Henry Award Collection for the past five years and is the author of *Careless Love*. Her most recent book is *Families and Survivors*.

**Pati Hill** (*The Falcon*) lives in Paris. She has published a novel, *The Pit and the Century Plant*, and recently a collection of poems, *Slave Days*. This winter she had a show of photocopied objects at the Kornblee Gallery.

**Ira Sadoff** (*Ward #3*) will have a short story in the O'Henry Collection of 1976, and new fiction is forthcoming in *Tri Quarterly*. A collection of his poems, *Settling Down*, was published in 1975. His poetry has appeared in *The New Yorker, Poetry, Esquire, Antaeus, Poetry Now, The Paris Review* and elsewhere.

**George Stiles** (*I'll Always Remember Lavender*) has published short stories in *The Hudson Review, Kenyon Review, New American Review, Best American Short Stories*, and others. He is also a playwright.

## INTERVIEW

**Franklin Ashley** teaches at the college of General Studies at the University of South Carolina in Columbia. He has written for *Harper's, New Times, Partisan Review, People*, and other magazines.

## POETRY

**Cathy Arden** has been published in *Fiction International* and *Sun*, and was a Ford-Venture Fellow in poetry at the Fiction International Conference, 1975.

**Laurel Blossom** commutes more or less regularly between New York and Columbus, Ohio. Her poetry has appeared widely.

**Robert Bly** received the National Book Award in 1968 for *Light Around The Body*. His books include *Silence in the Snowy Fields* and *Friends*. He is the editor of *The Seventies*, and his anthology *Leaping Poetry: An Idea with Poems and Translations*, was published September, 1975.

**Maxine Chernoff's** work has appeared in *The Paris Review, Out There* and *Telephone*. She has work forthcoming in *Poetry Now, Unmuzzled Ox*, and others. Along with poet Paul Hoover, she edits *OINK!*

**Nancy Condee's** translations of Bella Axmadulina's poetry have appeared in *Russian Literature Triquarterly*. She has also published a chapbook, *The Rape of Saint Emad*.

**Richard Elman's** novels include *An Education In Blood, Lilo's Diary* and the forthcoming *Taxi Driver*. His book of poems, *The Man Who Ate New York and Other Poems of Ossabau and Manhattan Island*, is also forthcoming. He is professor of writing at Columbia University.

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**Gary Fincke's** poetry has appeared in *Houston Forum, Cold Mountain Review* and *Chowder Review.* He recently received a Ph.D. from Kent State.

**Siv Cedering Fox** has recently published six books, two of which are translations to or from Swedish. Her most recent book of poems is *Mother Is.*

**James Galvin** is working on his M.F.A. at the University of Iowa. He is the assistant poetry editor of *The Iowa Review.*

**Patricia Goedicke's** first book of poems was published in 1968. A new book, *For the Four Corners,* will be out this spring. She lives in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

**Jill Grossman** is twenty-two years old. This is her first appearance in print.

**Jim Gustavson** has recently finished a novel called *California Crawling Blues.* He lives in Bolinas and Los Angeles.

**Marjorie Hawksworth** received the Dickinson Award of the Poetry Society of America. Her work will soon appear in *The Wisconsin Review, The Sou'wester, The New York Quarterly* and others.

**Günter Kunert** is one of the German Democratic Republic's leading writers. He is the author of several volumes of prose, short stories and essays but is best known as a poet. He lives in Berlin.

**Adam LeFevre's** play, *Phil Gafney*, will be produced in the spring of 1976 at the University of Iowa. He has appeared before in *The Paris Review.*

**Tom Luhrman's** poems have appeared in a number of magazines, including *Ironwood, kayak, Lillabulero* and *The Nation.*

**Robert Lundquist's** first book, *Private/Public,* will appear in June, 1976.

**Adrianne Marcus** has been published in *Poetry Now, Southern Poetry Review, New Poets* and other magazines. She wrote the text for *The Photojournalist: Mark and Leibovitz,* published in 1975.

**Anne S. Perlman's** poetry has appeared in *The Nation, The Hudson Review, Poetry Now* and *Mademoiselle.* Formerly a newspaper reporter, she is now reviewing poetry for the *San Francisco Chronicle.*

**Jeffrey Wells-Powers** has poems appearing in *Loon* and *Madrona.* He is the co-editor of *Marilyn: A Magazine of New Poetry* and serves as one of two student editors of *Grove: Contemporary Poetry and Translation.*

**Duncan Smith** lives in Providence and teaches at Brown. He translates and writes about the poetry of the German Democratic Republic, and on Marxist perspectives of contemporary western culture.

**Albert Stainton's** poetry has appeared in *Chelsea, Three Rivers Poetry Journal,* and *The Cincinnati Poetry Review.*

**F. Keith Wahle** has published three pamphlets with small presses: *The Part-Time Arsonist, The Precious Dead* and *The Paper Wedding Ring.* He lives in Cincinnati where he works at the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

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**Paul Wilner** has published criticism on Paul Goodman and William Witherup, and worked with The Poetry in the Schools Program in San Francisco. This is his first published poem.

**David Young's** most recent books are *Boxcars* and his translation of Rilke's *Duino Eligies*. He teaches at Oberlin College where he edits *Field*.

**ART**

**William Anthony** lives in New York City. His work is in the collections of the Whitney Museum, and the Chicago Art Institute, among others. His most recent show was at Konstsalongen Kavaletten in Uppsala, Sweden, in 1975.

**Hugh Kepets** lives in New York City where he is represented by The Fischbach Gallery. His work is in the collections of The Cleveland Museum of Art, the Yale University Art Gallery, and elsewhere.

**Heinz Emigholz** is a filmmaker who commutes between Hamburg, Germany and New York City. He is currently at work on an Arthur-Gordon-Pym Project.

**Jonathan Weld** is a young artist living in New York. His work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *The New York Times* and elsewhere.

* * *

The following Contributors Notes were left out of issue #64:

**Helen Barolini** *(Neruda vs. Sartre at the Sea)* lived in Rome for eight years and has translated several contemporary Italian writers. Her own work has appeared in *New York Review of Books*, *Kenyon Review*, and elsewhere.

**Richard Stull** is presently enrolled in the University of Iowa Writing Program and working on a manuscript of poems.

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